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# VINTAGE ROADSCENE

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Issue 205 December 2016 £4.20

## STAND AND DELIVER

*High Street vans  
and lorries of  
the Past*



Lorries in the 1970s



Marmon-Herrington



Driving a Horse-bus



## UK HEAVY HAUL

This new film captures 3 very different types of abnormal load movements in the UK. The first film, Deep Pile, follows the movement of a 50-metre long, 170-tonne steel pile from the Chepstow plant of manufacturer Mabey Bridge to the docks at Avonmouth. In the second feature, Kolossal Komatsu, the CPP team capture the marriage of the body to the chassis of a huge Komatsu 785 dump truck prior to its delivery to a busy Hanson Aggregate quarry in the Mendip Hills. The final story is a record of the movement of a massive quad-booster from the Alstrom factory in Stafford to an electricity generating station near Preston. Power to the People not only shows the 500-tonne combination moving over the road network but also depicts the ship-to-shore transfer of the complete vehicle from the marine vessel Terra Marique. This DVD has been fully researched and narrated and aimed square at fellow trucking enthusiasts. **£16.95**



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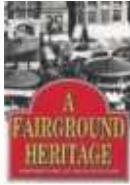
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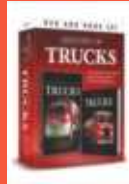
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**W**elcome to another issue – the last with a 2016 date on it – how time flies. I know I've said it before, but these days, we hardly finish one rally season before the next is beginning. Winter is upon us, so it's time to settle down by the fire and enjoy a good read and look at some nostalgic pictures. If you've missed any issues, maybe this is the time to 'fill in the gaps' by contacting the Kelsey Shop or Subscriptions Department – details on Page 3 – or maybe you should drop a hint or two about a subscription with Christmas approaching...

The next Road Haulage Archive issue will be coming soon. It's called 'A Lifetime with Lorries' and follows the career of Neil Johnston. Recently retired, he has been involved with lorries for his whole life. Working for his family's business, apprenticed to AEC and later driving for a number of other companies, his career is not so different from that of many other transport professionals.

The difference is that he has a photographic collection which reflects his years with lorries, with emphasis on the livestock and general haulage vehicles with which he was involved during the 1960s and the tippers he drove from the 1970s until recently. Thank goodness for the guys who have taken pictures during

their careers, or it would be a lot more difficult to put a magazine like Vintage Roadscene together – and a lot less interesting. Yes, we have the manufacturers' pictures, from brochures, shows and road tests from previous magazines, but these only really tell part of the story.

I have to admit that I am as guilty as the next man of not taking pictures, notably of the vehicles I have been involved with and others I've been to look at, even at rallies and in my years in transport journalism. Which is what makes the sort of pictures in Neil's collection and those which other enthusiasts, like our friends in the Grimsby-based 'Wednesday Club', have gathered together, all the more important, in helping us to preserve the memories of our road transport heritage and 'the way things were'. And the vehicles are seen just doing their job.

Yes, we all put on our rose-tinted specs when we look at the old pictures, but it's important for us to remember the past, if only so we can pass on the knowledge to future generations. How often do you hear an old hand say: "Lorry drivers today don't know they're born." The old arts of roping and sheeting, reading maps and remembering routes, knowing how to keep the motor going when something goes wrong are all part of our rich heritage and we mustn't let it

be forgotten.

I'd be willing to take a bet that there are more enthusiasts who are excited by eight-wheelers, maximum weight artics and long distance haulage. But more of us enthusiasts who worked in the transport industry were probably involved in local work, deliveries to factories, shops or even private houses, whether with raw materials or finished goods of all kinds.

Many loads might have gone on the back with a fork-lift truck, but it's a safe bet that even more had to be 'hand-balled' off and were delivered, for example, as a pile of cardboard cartons on a sack-barrow, which had to be manoeuvred past the customers in the shop to get to the store-room. Oh what fun!

And if you were back in the office, having promised delivery for today, remember worrying about that driver who would always bring one delivery back: "Sorry, it was half-day closing..." Every time.

If any of this jogs your memory, why not drop us a line and tell us about your adventures. Not everybody had to drive over Shap Fell in a blizzard – not that I'm in any way decrying the efforts of those who had to. It might not be so dramatic, but there's still plenty of interest in those suburban streets. We'll keep bringing you plenty of pictures to stimulate those memories.



## ON THE COVER...

This picture was taken while Commercial Motor was looking at the bus services around Bury St Edmunds, where there were many interesting 'independents' – we might pick up on them for a future scenes past or 'passenger transport archive', please let me know if you'd like to see that. The Morris LD 30 cwt van, UCF 51 (West Suffolk, 1962) seen here was operated by Hunter & Oliver Ltd, Wine Merchants of Bury St Edmunds. This was the version with the higher roofline. It was a typical delivery van of its time, before the Transit swept all before it. A wine merchant like this probably wouldn't have a delivery van of its own these days.

There's lots more interest in this busy scene in Buttermarket, Bury St Edmunds – Lloyd Bank is still there. There's the market stalls along the street, the pedestrians on the pavement – and in the road – including the old fella with the sack tied over his shoulder and the Eastern Counties Bristol/ECW MW service bus following the LD van. There are plenty more pictures like this in this month's 'Scenes Past' feature, and it's a subject we can come back to, again and again in the future. (CHC abb252)

# CLASSIC REGENTS

*Ron Henderson looks at the different fire appliances built by Merryweather on the AEC Regent bus chassis.*



**Above:** The first AEC Regent turntable ladder was exported to Bahia Blanca, Argentina in 1951, together with another normal control Regent, a limousine-type Searchlight Tender for the same customer. Both had Meadows petrol engines.

**M**erryweather & Sons pioneered the development of AEC chassis as an efficient platform for fire engines.

While AEC was renowned as 'the builder of London's buses', it was also the builder of London's fire engines, as 52 AEC Regent III-based dual-purpose appliances and one emergency tender with shortened 13 ft 6 ins wheelbases were supplied to London Fire Brigade.

The success of the diesel-driven Regent III fire engine prompted further developments and, between 1951 and 1957, two batches of fire appliances were mounted on the Regent III 16ft-4ins wheelbase double-deck bus chassis. The range consisted of a mixed batch of diesel-driven forward control vehicles and petrol-driven normal control appliances.

Examining the petrol-engined Regents first, these were developments of the Merryweather normal control Regal conversions. A total of eleven vehicles were produced, all powered by 6PC Meadows engines. The first of the batch was a streamlined limousine searchlight van for Bahia Blanca, Argentina. To normal control configuration, it was equipped with four 1,000 watt focus-control floodlights, together



**Above:** Pernambuco, Brazil, bought this petrol-powered normal control Regent III Searchlight Tender, two years after an identical unit was exported to Bahia Blanca, Argentina. The two were the only examples built to this design.

with tripods and 300ft cable reels, which allowed the floodlights be operated remotely from the tender. Power came from a 9KVA generator, operated via a power take-off from the road engine. Provision was also made for an additional ten 300-watt floodlights to be plugged in if necessary. It was joined by a new Regent turntable ladder, delivered two

months later.

A further three machines went to South America, commencing with turntable ladders for Porto Alegre and Victoria, Brazil, plus a second searchlight van in June 1953, for Recife. Two turntable ladders went to Egypt, one to Alexandria and the other to Cairo. Bombay, Singapore and Trinidad and Tobago





**Above:** The Egyptian cities of Alexandria and Cairo both bought petrol-driven Regents, fitted with built in pumps and 120ft ladders. The Alexandria one had an enclosed limousine cab.

all ordered turntable ladders as well. Trinidad's machine featured an open cab, while the other two were closed cab versions.

Among the batch of export vehicles was one for the UK market. Denbigh and Montgomeryshire ordered the only normal control Regent turntable ladder in the United Kingdom, for service at the brigades Wrexham fire station. This was one of the few turntable ladders to have a first aid hose reel and fortunately this appliance is another that still survives.

The eleven vehicles in this batch were a mixture of left hand drive and right hand drive, the latter going to authorities in Britain, Trinidad and Bombay. With the exception of the Bahia Blanca and Denbigh models, all the turntable ladders had built-in Merryweather Supertype 800 gallons per minute turbine pumps.

The second batch of Merryweather appliances based on the AEC Regent 16 ft 4 ins wheelbase chassis consisted of ten appliances, all on forward control chassis, fitted with AEC 9.6 litre diesel engines, as fitted to London's dual-purpose fire engines. The first of the batch was a turntable ladder for Scotland's South Eastern Area Fire Brigade, which covered the Edinburgh and Lothian regions.

The 100ft ladder on this appliance was a pre-war built mechanically-operated assembly, transferred from a redundant fire engine. Following Merryweather's introduction of hydraulically-operated ladders in 1956, this appliance was returned to the maker and refitted with the new operating mechanisms. A second similar appliance was

delivered to the brigade three years later.

The second appliance of the batch went to Canberra, Australia and was of totally different design, having an open aspect half-cab for the driver alongside the engine, like those fitted to buses and coaches. This was a carry-over from a series of Merryweather turntable ladders which had been built on Leyland TD7 bus chassis during World War II.

In April 1953, The City of Salisbury, Rhodesia, received a similar appliance with open half-cab for the driver, but with the additional feature of a pump and hose-reel equipment. Another export order was for Penang, Malaysia, which received a 100ft turntable ladder in 1954, for service within the Municipality of Georgetown. Unlike the

other turntable ladders in this batch, the Georgetown machine was built with a two-man cab, as opposed to most of the others which had double cabs.

Before the remaining three orders for United Kingdom brigades were executed, there were two more totally contrasting appliances within the batch. In early 1953, the first of a pair of a unique type of pump/hose-laying appliances was shipped out to Trinidad and Tobago, in the British West Indies.

Built to the order of Chief Fire Officer Major R G Cox, these appliances were equipped to carry more than a mile of 3½ inch rubber-lined hose, for laying out in two rows, as the appliance was moving. The lengths of hose, coupled and laid in a series of long, narrow



**Above:** Trinidad & Tobago Fire Brigades relied almost wholly on British equipment, supplied by the Crown Agents to the Colonies Department. Merryweather supplied a pair of these impressive and unique diesel-powered Regent Pump/Hose-Layers to Trinidad in 1953.

Canberra, Australia and Salisbury, Rhodesia had Regent turntable ladders with a single driver's cabs, the rest of the crew being accommodated on a transverse bench seat behind the cab. This Canberra example still survives and is on display in the New South Wales Fire Museum.



compartments at the rear, was accessed by opening two hinged flaps at the rear, the bottom one with 'castoring' wheels, becoming a trailing platform.

The strengthened roof of the machine accommodated two powerful 700 gallons per minute water monitors, supplied through a built-in amidships 1,000 gpm single stage turbine pump. The lockers contained a 3,000 gallons collapsible dam, as well as a comprehensive field telephone set, with 3,000 ft of cable. These machines served at Port of Spain and San Fernando.

**Right: Penang in Malaysia and the City of Bath, England, both bought Regent turntable ladders with enclosed two-man cabs. The other UK examples had double cabs.**



**Above: South Eastern Area Fire Brigade, which covered the City of Edinburgh, bought two Regent turntable ladders with double cabs. Both were originally fitted with ladders from pre-war fire engines, which were later converted to hydraulic operation. This one still survives.**

The final three AEC Regents were delivered between 1956 and 1957, the first going to Derbyshire Fire Brigade in April 1956, followed by one for the City of Bath in October, the Bath one being one of only two to have a two man cab, the same as Penang's example. By April 1957, the end was in sight for Regent fire engines, when the last was delivered to Kent Fire Brigade's Bromley Fire Station.

Quite an unusual-looking appliance, the turret was painted dark green and the bodywork was finished in natural aluminium. Even more unusual though, the machine had a slightly-lengthened front grille, protruding more than usual from the front of the bodywork, in order to accommodate a larger 11.3 litre engine.

Thereafter, Merryweather continued to make turntable ladders, but all future examples were mounted on AEC's new Mercury chassis.



# CLASSIC LORRIES

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Photographed in its prime, carrying a load of sheep from Scotland down to Detling, for onward sale, ERF 68G, RTM 566, is seen in a lay-by overlooking the North Sea on the A1 near Berwick on Tweed. The 1956 Gardner 6LW-powered lorry was originally operated by Aves of Sandy. This vehicle was probably responsible for instilling Neil Johnston with his on-going regard for the ERF marque.



# A Lifetime with Lorries

**Mike Forbes** previews the next *Road Haulage Archive* issue, which makes the most of Neil Johnston's photographic archives, following his career in transport, showing pictures of a most interesting selection of lorries, old and not so old.

**N**eil Johnston has been involved with lorries for his whole life. Working for his family's business, apprenticed to AEC and later driving for a number of other companies, his career is rather like

that of many other transport professionals. The difference is that he has a photographic collection which reflects his years with lorries, with emphasis on the livestock and general haulage vehicles with which he was involved during the 1960s.

The offer to use these pictures for the next *Road Haulage Archive* issue was too good to turn down, as it provides a progression, from the earliest vehicles operated by Tom Johnston, Neil's father, in connection with his livestock business, based at Detling, near



**Above:** From 1959, when the first AEC joined the Tom Johnston fleet, to 1967, one of the company's new vehicles was to be seen on the stand of local dealer W H Gatward at the Kent Count Show. Here, AEC Mammoth Major 8 MK V, 12 LKK (Kent, 1960), the second AEC eight-wheeler to join the Johnston fleet, is flanked on the left by similar vehicle, 14 LKK, for haulage contractors, E & H Ridgewell, of Northfleet, and a 'tin-front' Mammoth Major Mk III for Goldwells of East Malling, the cider makers, later to become part of the Allied Breweries group, with the nameboard on the cab advertising 'Pink Lady', a perry-based drink, a competitor to 'Babydam' in that era. On the right, there is AEC Mercury, 1 LKK, with a third axle conversion, which looks as if it could have been destined for the Henley's fleet, and a Mercury four-wheeler for Alan Firmin, with 'cherished' registration, AF 142. What a splendid line-up.



**Right:** A 1961 AEC Mercury six-wheeler, 4 PKR, is seen here in the Johnston yard at Detling, fitted with a cattle container, along with Thames Trader, 486 MKL (Kent, 1960), fitted with the cattle box from an earlier Dodge, 5 DKK, and 417 RKM, a 1961 four-wheeled AEC Mercury. Although in use on cattle transport, both AECs carry the W E Reeve lettering on their cabs. All the fleet was still painted in Tom Johnston's red livery at this time, however.

**Below:** A lovely line-up of AEC Mercury artics in the Detling yard, all in the original red livery and dating from 1961 to 1963, from the right, 7349 WY, 606 VKR and 8 VKT with W E Reeve on the cab-top nameboard, with 6 UKK and damaged 12 TKJ on the left, with Tom Johnston lettering.



**Above:** The change to blue livery is shown by 1960 AEC Mammoth Major 8 Mk V, 12 LKK, first seen on the stand at the Kent County Show, loaded with paper reels from Aylesford, plus AEC Mercury four-wheeler, 490 PKE of 1961, both in blue, with 1959 Mammoth Major 11 GKN and two Mercury artics, including 606 VKR, in red, although carrying the W E Reeves fleetname.

Maidstone, Kent, through the many lorries operated by the company, especially after the general haulage business and vehicles of W E Reeve Ltd of Maidstone were taken over, along with a look at some interesting vehicles with which Neil came into contact with during his years as an apprentice at AEC, the lorries he drove for his father's company and many more, mainly tippers, which he drove for other operators in the Kent area during the rest of his driving career.

Neil's first love has always been ERF – not that he has always been able to drive one. The apprenticeship at AEC came about because his father's company ran vehicles of this make during the 1960s. Later, he was able to influence his employers' buying decisions at times, but fate was often to deny him a seat behind the wheel of one of his favourites. This hasn't affected his love of the marque or his enthusiasm for lorries in



**Above left:** So far, it's nearly all AECs. Neil photographed plenty of lorries while he was apprenticed at AEC, including this Works Transport Mammoth Major Mk V, which ran on Middlesex tradeplates 490 H. **Above right:** This earlier AEC Mammoth Major Mk III, WMU has just returned from a road test, with the tradeplate hanging from the offside headlamp, after rectification of a fault at the AEC works. It is parked with a selection of different AEC goods and passenger vehicles, including, just seen on the left, one of Neil's father's AEC Mercury tractor units with a York Transfour four-in-line trailer, towed in for repair, hence the bumper lying across the catwalk.

general. He now spends a lot of time building models of the lorries he remembers from his career, when he isn't visiting vehicle rallies and other events.

Neil's father, Tom Johnston was a Scot who settled in Kent to become a "Livestock Salesman and Exporter" as it said on the headboard of his vehicles, based at Detling in Kent, on land where the Kent County Showground is now. He found he needed his own lorries to collect and deliver sheep, to and from Scotland in particular, and a fleet was built up from the 1950s onwards, with the first eight-wheelers coming at the end of the decade.

In 1959, he took over the business of

transport contractor, W E Reeve Ltd of Maidstone, when the owner died. The livestock and general haulage fleets were operated alongside each other, with the cattle boxes being fitted and taken off the eight-wheelers according to traffic requirements.

From 1963 to 1969, Neil Johnston was apprenticed at AEC's Southall works, where he went to "learn how to mend them, rather than build them". He had plenty of adventures along the way, with his weekends being far from days off, often entailing a trip to Scotland and back with loads of animals.

Meanwhile, in 1966, the W E Reeve general haulage business was sold, the livery



**Above:** After leaving the livestock haulage business in 1971, Neil first drove this Scammell Routeman eight-wheeled tipper, YGK 219G (London, 1968-9) for Bearsted Contractors, based near Maidstone, hauling sand, gravel and asphalt. It made a change to be on local work and home each evening.



**Above:** Neil got to drive an ERF when he returned to the family firm, with this Cummins-powered six-wheeled tractor unit, BVT 357T, ex-AG Bird heavy haulage, which pulled a specially-built three-deck livestock trailer, mainly between Kent and Scotland or Belgium.

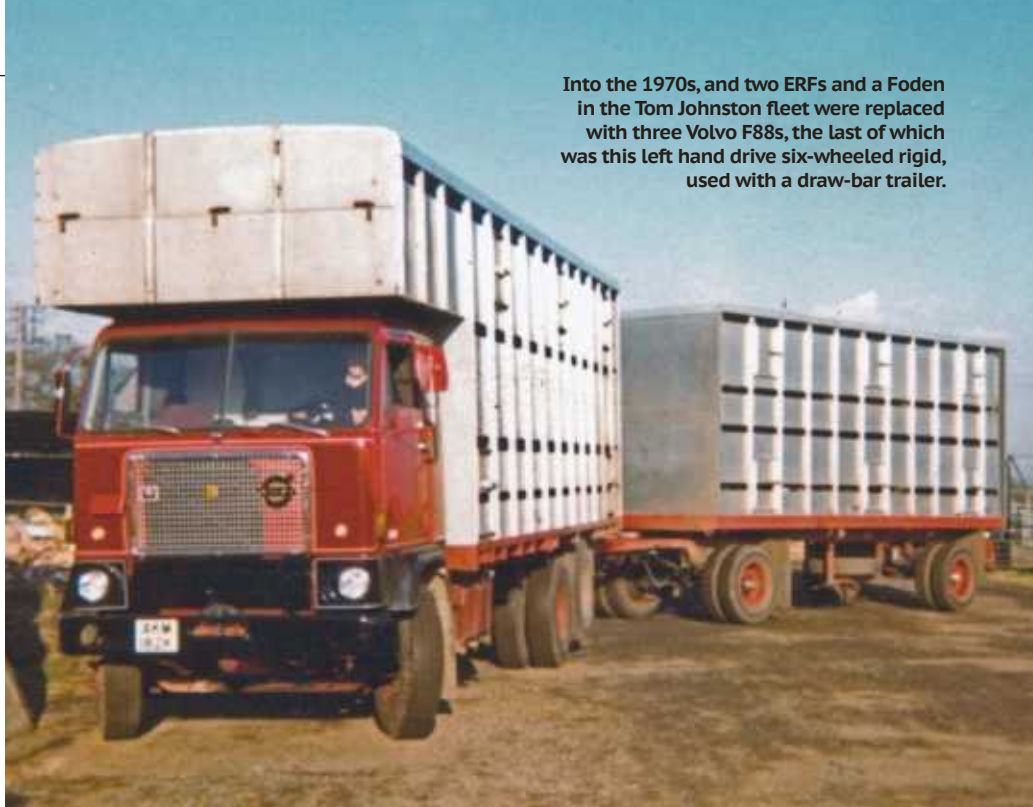


changing from red to blue. This issue of the Road Haulage Archive contains many pictures of the vehicle fleet, both in its original red livery, carrying the Tom Johnston or W E Reeve name, plus the blue post-sale colour scheme.

Neil returned to the fold for a few years, driving the livestock vehicles to and from Scotland and over to Belgium, often double-manned. However, after being asked to do too many solo trips every week, he left to drive tippers locally around Kent. This he did for a number of different operators for the rest of his career in transport. He comments that he must have spent 40 years out of his driving days hauling aggregates out of Wetton Brothers' Aylesford sand pit, along the many other jobs, all of which he has recorded, along with the photographic evidence.

This provides us with a story as the basis of the publication, truly a 'Lifetime with Lorries'.

Into the 1970s, and two ERFs and a Foden in the Tom Johnston fleet were replaced with three Volvo F88s, the last of which was this left hand drive six-wheeled rigid, used with a draw-bar trailer.



**1:** Next, after a short spell as a lorry mechanic, Neil spent around ten years driving for Peach Contractors of Faversham. The first lorry he drove for this company was a Perkins 540-powered Leyland Mastiff four-wheeled tipper, again carrying aggregates or asphalt mainly around Kent.

**2:** In the mid-1980s, a move to Gardiner's Transport saw Neil driving first Iveco and then ERF artic bulk tippers, including this E14, H994 AKE.

**3:** For 15 years, until 2003, when the boss retired, Neil drove a succession of MAN artic bulk tippers for for Medway-based A & J Hirst. Here this MAN 18-403, P484 MKJ, dating from 1997, shows off a newly-painted Crane Fruehauf 'bathtub' tri-axle tipping trailer.

**4:** From 2003, until he retired from driving in 2012, Neil drove for S Clark, formerly of Penge and an old-established ERF operator, but by this time based in Rochester, Kent. Before turning to Renault vehicles, Neil was given this brand new DAF CF 'Spacecab' unit, AE60 DMO, with which he continued to haul sand and gravel around South-east England.





A Leyland Buffalo, typical 32 ton artic of the time, JKH 117N (Hull, 1975), with a refrigerated container on a platform trailer, in the fleet of Herbert Fletcher of Hull, seen in Fraser Street, Grimsby, when traffic was diverted because of demolition of housing on the main road.

# Street Scenes from the 1970s

*A selection of pictures of lorries, mainly from the early 1970s, seen on the roads around Grimsby.*

**R**ay and Dennis Newcomb, of the 'Wednesday Club', a group of ex-transport professionals, who meet regularly to make the most of their enthusiasm and reminiscences, were given these photographs by Richard Cass, who was in

charge of the cold store attached to Grimsby fish market. They mainly show various lorries of the day, in the liveries of local and national companies, making their way through the town.

They will bring back memories for those who knew the area, as well as transport

enthusiasts from further afield. Some of them are not the best quality photographs, being the result of probably hasty 'snaps' from the roadside of moving vehicles, and some of the colours might be a bit pale, but they convey the atmosphere of 40-odd years ago.



**Left:** The local bus services were also diverted along Fraser Street, during the re-development around Convmore Road, as here, Roe dual-door with double-deck bodied Daimler Fleetline, OEE 879G, fleet no 79 of the Grimsby-Cleethorpes fleet, on route 3C to North Sea Lane.

**Below:** A Guy Big J artic of Alpine Refrigeration with a trailer in the livery of Findus Frozen Foods, heads from Ladysmith Road and Salvesens, towards the docks.







**Left:** With the old houses demolished, the road was re-opened, prior to the new development. The photograph was taken at the junction between Convamore Road and Wragby Street, showing Cummins-powered Guy Big J tractor unit, YJV 146K (Grimsby, 1972), of Humber McVeigh, with a TIP trailer rental fridge trailer, followed by a Morris Marina.

**Below:** Another Guy Big J, this time Gardner 180-powered, YHE 837J (Barnsley, 1971), in the fleet of Barrick's Haulage, of Goxhill, North Lincolnshire, with a sheeted load on a tandem-axle platform trailer, is passing this time, in a photo taken from the other side of the road, but still looking towards the docks. The Plaxton-bodied coach behind is in the dark blue, cream and light blue livery used by Granville Tours, which had a depot nearby. A Volkswagen 'Beetle' passes in the other direction, beyond which can be seen parked two artic trailers, probably fridges, with side access doors for multi-drops.



**1:** We can't quite read the registration on this AEC Mandator artic, with a 33 ft refrigerated box trailer in the livery of 'Karricold'. This Grimsby company carried part-loads for fish merchants, which was seen as a safer alternative to the fish trains, from which pilferage was rife, offering a door-to-door service, with the driver as custodian of the load. A Ford Cortina Mk 2 can be seen following the lorry.

**2:** An AEC Marshall six-wheeler, VEE 85J (Grimsby, 1971), with a refrigerated body, in the livery of Ross Frozen Foods, is seen at the same spot as the Karricold Mandator, turning from Pasture Street into Convamore Road. Notice that the driver is leaning over, Formula 1-style for the corner, as the lorry heels over the other way.

**3:** A Cummins-powered Guy Big J artic of another local company, WFW 106J (Lindsey, Lincolnshire, 1971), with a neatly-sheeted and roped load on the tandem-axle platform trailer, in the same position as the previous two Guys, followed by a string of traffic. A Grimsby AEC Bridgemaster lowheight double-decker can be seen approaching on a side road to the left.

**4:** Another picture from the other side of Convamore Road at the same junction, this time showing an AEC Mandator artic, ERU 887L (Lindsey, Lincolnshire, 1972), in the livery of Trailer Express, with a short skeletal trailer, carrying a '20 ft box'.



**Right:** When the Pyewipe Industrial Estate was developed on the outskirts of Grimsby, the roads were laid first, before the commercial premises were built. Unfortunately slightly blurred as it was passing at speed, here is an Ergo-cabbed Leyland Super Comet or Beaver – strangely fitted with a yellow registration plate at the front – in the livery of Danish Bacon, with one of the company's typical short fridge trailers of the day, followed by a platform-bodied Bedford KM.



**Above left:** Two Guy Big J tractor units – obviously a popular choice among Grimsby transport operators in the early 1970s – in Lyons Maid-Findus livery, seen loading at the Wickham Road cold store on the Fish Docks, run by the Grimsby Cold Storage Co Ltd. **Above right:** Ford & Slater, the Leyland dealership, moved from its old premises in Macauley Street, Grimsby – where so many of the wonderful old pictures of customers' vehicles we've seen before were taken – to purpose-built premises on Estate Road I at Pyewipe. Here is JIF 514N (Leicester, 1975), the company's Leyland Marathon demonstrator, when this model was new, with an Ergo-cabbed unit in Trailer Express livery, a Mobil tanker trailer, a Dodge K Series rigid and a Mini Van in view, beyond the rear of the trailer.



**Above:** British Road Services Ltd – BRSL – set up 'Grimsby Fish', to offer a road transport alternative to rail for the transport of fish from Grimsby to markets around Britain. Here, an AEC artic unit, assumed to be a Mandator, UWB 784F (Sheffield, 1967-8), with an older-style insulated box, but with twist-locks, on a skeletal trailer, seen parked on Fish Dock Road.



**Right:** We're back at the junction of Pasture Street and Convamore Road, with a Scammell Crusader artic unit, NEE 869M (Grimsby, 1973), travelling in the same direction as the AEC Marshall seen previously, passing a Corporation bus stop sign and a Mercedes-Benz 'W123' saloon of the day.

**Below:** This less-than-perfect picture of an L-registered Leyland Buffalo, with a fridge box trailer, of Brekkes of Hull, was taken outside the company's premises near Fish dock Road, Grimsby.



**Right:** Before we had McDonald's and Burger King, there was Wimpy. This Guy Big J8 eight-legger, SCL 148J (Norwich, 1971), with a presumably refrigerated box body, was again turning from Pasture Street into Convamore Road, followed by a motor caravan, based on a BMC J4 van.



**Left:** A Leyland Super Comet, with the later style of higher Ergo cab and, presumably a platform body, of Frank Stokes Haulage of Worksop, XRR 633M (Nottinghamshire, 1973), is delivering to Liverine, Bird Fancier Supplies, in previously-seen Fraser Street. Notice how the stone kerb is worn down. Given the year and the fashions of the day, the long hair is unlikely to indicate a lady driver...

**Left:** Part of the Ross fleet seen before disposal, with Scammell Crusaders, a Leyland Marathon and an Atkinson 'Silver Knight' Mk I, plus fridge trailers. Mitchell Cotts, Lex and others took on the distribution contracts. Ross is now re-branded as Youngs Seafoods. DSV (DFDS) handles most of the raw materials, with Yeadsley's picking the frozen and chilled deliveries.



**Right:** Ray says: "Brother Dennis always liked a good smoke in the morning!" Sorry, it's the classic cloud of smoke from the cold diesel engine in Ess-Foods' Seddon Atkinson 400 Series artic, TEE 827T (Grimsby, 1978).

**Below:** A few older pictures now: John Butt, trawler owner and fish merchant, ran six Guy Otters, like FJV 661 (Grimsby, 1955). During the day, the 'box' was often removed, so the lorry could then attend the fish auction, move ice and packaging around the docks, and deliver fish for onward movement to the railway fish vans. Then the box was fitted back on and the vehicles would deliver fish, mainly to the Midlads, during the night, making use of 16-20 hours of the day.



**Right:** Here is a KV-cabbed ERF GEE 957 (Grimsby, 1955) carrying a box container. The vehicles of Orwell Fish Company of Grimsby were pink and cream, with a wavy line along the box and cab, representing waves on the sea.



Another ERF with a KV cab, this time an eight-wheeler, PJV 844 (Grimsby, 1961). H Mudd & Sons was another trawler owner and fish merchant, with a factory built on the North Wall of Grimsby No 1 Fish Dock. This company was later taken over by Associated Cold Storage and Transport, which also acquired Humber Warehousing, among others. Note the side loading door, enabling orders to go on or come off as required. The vehicle's colour scheme was red and white, complete with a white carnation flower; Ray says it made the Bird's Eye ERF 'Chicken Pie Specials' look a bit plain...





**Left:** Hewitt's Brewery on East Street, Grimsby, closed down over 30 years ago, having stopped brewing in 1968. The company had been taken over by United Breweries, the Bass Charrington. This Albion CX six-wheeler, BJV 329 (Grimsby, 1950), was part of the fleet in earlier years. Ray has spoken to the retired Bass Charrington fleet engineer, who said that when he came to look at the Hewitts fleet, most of them were unfit for purpose. When he spoke to the manager of the company, responsible for service and repairs of the vehicles, he said that Hewitts only wanted minimum maintenance carried out, as "the lorries only trundled about the surrounding area of Grimsby."

**Below:** A 'Chinese Six' Foden Diesel, JV 6020, dating from around 1937, loaded with barrels of Danish butter, in the green and cream livery of Grimsby Roadways, based in Garth Road. Later McVeigh bought the lorries, mainly to obtain the 'A' licences.



These pictures are reproduced here courtesy of the Grimsby Evening Telegraph, to the 'Bygones' page of which Ray Newcomb also contributes.

**Above:** Grimsby Telegraph vans lined-up in Kent Street, two Austin A40s and an earlier Austin 8, all derived from cars of the period, 1940s-'50s.

**Below:** A Morris Commercial CVH, with the short bonnet, GRH 847 (Hull, 1946), of George Gillard, Fish Merchants and Curers, of Hull, seen with 4 stone returnable fish boxes being loaded into railway vans for onward shipment, with which later transferred to road transport.

**Right:** To finish, an atmospheric picture, supplied by Kevin Dennis, showing two Leyland Comets, LAD-cabbed PJL 603 and 'Mouth-organ' EDO 590 (Holland, Lincolnshire, 1960 and 1952), in the fleet of Geest, then banana suppliers, ready to set off on night deliveries to markets.





# VINTAGE ROADSCENE 'HOW TO' SERIES

Amazingly, there only just over a hundred years between these two forms of transport. Joanne drives the Star horse bus gently past the Concorde at the Brooklands Museum. Don't start those jet engines up just yet fellas...



## HOW TO DRIVE A HORSE-DRAWN BUS ...“AND WALK ON.”

It's not widely known, but aside from anything with an engine, our **Malcolm** also loves horses. He rides his own and has learned to plough with a team of Percherons under the tuition of ploughing champion Robert Samson. But this is something else. Today, he's going to find out what it's like to drive the Routemaster of the day – a 'Star' horse-drawn double deck omnibus from 1898. A real Vintage Roadscene, then?

**T**oday we see horses as either a form of sport, in terms of horse racing, or as a leisure activity. For me? There's nothing better than having a blast across open countryside on my horse, Barney – aside from going on a more sedate hack down



Above: Next, spend over an hour getting them ready for duty...





**Above:** Joanne hold Grace's tail while Malcolm buckles-up.

to the pub on a summer evening, perhaps. My point? Well, there are a few key words to stress here: 'leisure activity' – it's optional. I don't have to do it every morning of my working life, come rain or shine. 'Open countryside' – if I fall off, the only thing I'm likely to come into contact with is 'terra firma', not the teaming masses of Victorian, or Edwardian London. So imagine how hard it must be to steer a laden wagon – or in the context of this article, a double-deck horse-bus, full of people – through crowded city streets? Here's a thing – I'm about to find out.

### WHY THE INTERNAL COMBUSTION ENGINE WON

But before that, there's one other contrast that I need to share with you. Even the most recalcitrant early internal combustion engine can usually be coaxed into life after a few minutes on the starting handle. It can then

be left to warm-up, while the driver puts on a heavy coat to keep out the winter weather. Then it's a case of 'toot toot' – or 'ding ding' if you insist – and straight out of the depot to start work.

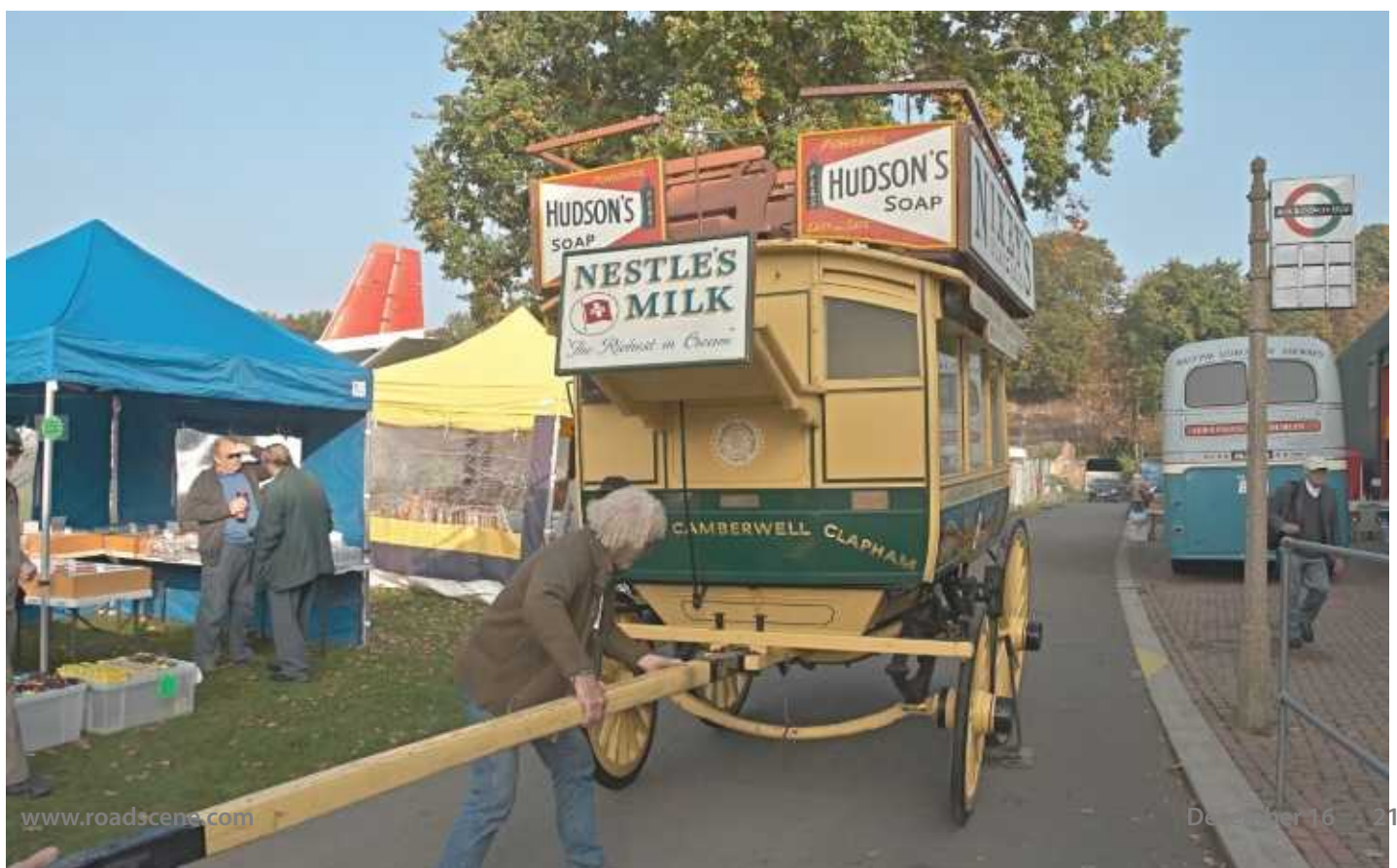
So far, I've been here on a chilly morning at Brooklands for almost an hour and we haven't even got 'the engine' – in this case, Percheron mares, Beatrice and Grace – coupled-up to the bus yet. If we're looking back in history to judge how and why the internal combustion engine managed to catch on so quickly in commercial transport, the instant availability for work has to be a key factor.

That and the rather obvious fact that Beatrice



**Above:** Hang on - nearly there... Only one more horse to go.

**Below:** Next, Malcolm helps Tony get the bus ready. Note wheel chock. 'Elf and Safety', innit?





and Grace here are living creatures and need feeding and looking after 24/7, whereas the owners of new-fangled internal combustion-engined buses could just park them up when not required, with no further expense – or in the case of the likes of Maidstone & District Motor Services, whip off the bus body, replace it with a lorry body and use it to deliver produce to the London markets overnight, before returning for another round of bus duties the next day, making twice as much cash. In contrast, over-work a horse and, just like a human, it'll get stressed and ill, with a shortened working life. Which explains why the last horse-buses ran in the capital as early as 1910.

I'm pondering these historical aspects of road transport development while helping my mentor, Joanne Moore, get 'The Girls' ready for a stint of horse bus duty at the 'Transport Fest' event at the London Bus Museum at Brooklands. They – that's Beatrice and Grace together with Joanne, her mum, Jane and the grooms – have already travelled down from Warwickshire in their modern diesel-powered horsebox at the crack of dawn. So first job is to

**Below:** We're ready to go. Joanne starts the long climb up to the driver's seat.



unload the horses, give them each a hay net to chomp on and offer them a drink. Excuse me for a mo' – I have to go and fetch some drinking water...

### HE'S A STAR

One thing to note here if you're scared of horses – the larger they are, the more gentle they tend to be. You're more likely to get bitten on the bum by a little Shetland Pony, than trampled to death by a 17 hands heavy horse – although to be fair, if one does tread on your foot by accident, the pain will be equal to having a Gardner 6LX diesel engine dropped on your piggies from a great height. But other than that... Hang on... Joanne is going to show me how to 'tack the girls up' now and, in spite of having done it before, I'm still all fingers and thumbs. Ah right, that one goes UNDER that one, does it? Joanne gives her mum one of her 'He means well' looks.

Right, we're nearly there. "Go and see how Tony is getting on with setting the bus up, can you?" Joanne suggests. "And tell him we'll be ready to go in ten minutes." I'd forgotten about Tony. That's Tony Drewitt, London Bus Museum stalwart, horse-bus historian and custodian of the original horse-drawn double-deck 'Star'



**Right:** At last, Joanne gives the command "Walk On" and we're off on a trial run. Well, trial 'walk' actually.

26 seat 'garden seat' omnibus, dating from 1898 and originally used by the owner, a Mr. Andrews, between Clapham and Camberwell. Anorak fact? Like many other things in the modern world, Great Britain 'invented' the double-deck bus as a result of huge demand created by the Great Exhibition.

I find Tony and the bus outside the London Bus Museum building and explain we're ready to rumble. Tony suggests we move the bus back to make it easier to harness Beatrice and Grace up. 'Substantial' is the word we could use here – or better still, 'heavy'. "Cop hold of that," suggests Tony, pointing to the wooden shaft that needs to be fixed to the front axle turntable. It's only a length of wood, but it takes some lifting. Next, I have to insert a pin, to lock it into place. It looks like an original pin from 1898 and it's not going in without a fight. Next, we have to attach some leather straps and, just when I'm thinking of taking a break for a brew, Tony asks me to go and tell Joanne that we're all set. The Brooklands Horse-Bus service starts at 11 am, the entire crew have been at it for over an hour and we still haven't got 'the engine' coupled to the actual bus yet. Labour intensive? You could say that.

### TIME FOR A TEST DRIVE

The girls are raring to go. Being real live creatures, Beatrice and Grace are naturally interested in their new surroundings and, even



**Above:** Back at 'the depot', Joanne has to turn the team around in a tight turning space. Perfect job.



though horses in harness wear blinkers (so they can't actually see the cart – or in this case the bus – they're pulling), Joanne and the grooms have to hang on to them and offer calming words of reassurance. Horses are creatures of habit – we've all heard the famous story about the milkman's horse that would walk by itself up to the next alleyway to meet up him as he emerged. This is at the other end of the scale.

The museum is open to the public now and, naturally, a pair of horses are already drawing a crowd. I hold Grace's bridle while Joanne moves her back-end into the shafts – that's the horse's back – end, you understand, not Joanne's. Both horses are well-trained and co-operative, but imagine doing this by gaslight, at 4 am on a cold wet winter's morning, with two grumpy horses who know what's in store for them and an inspector with a 'Blakey' demeanor, telling you to "Get that bus aaart." You've a 14 hour day ahead with no protection from the elements. Modern bus drivers? You don't know you're born.

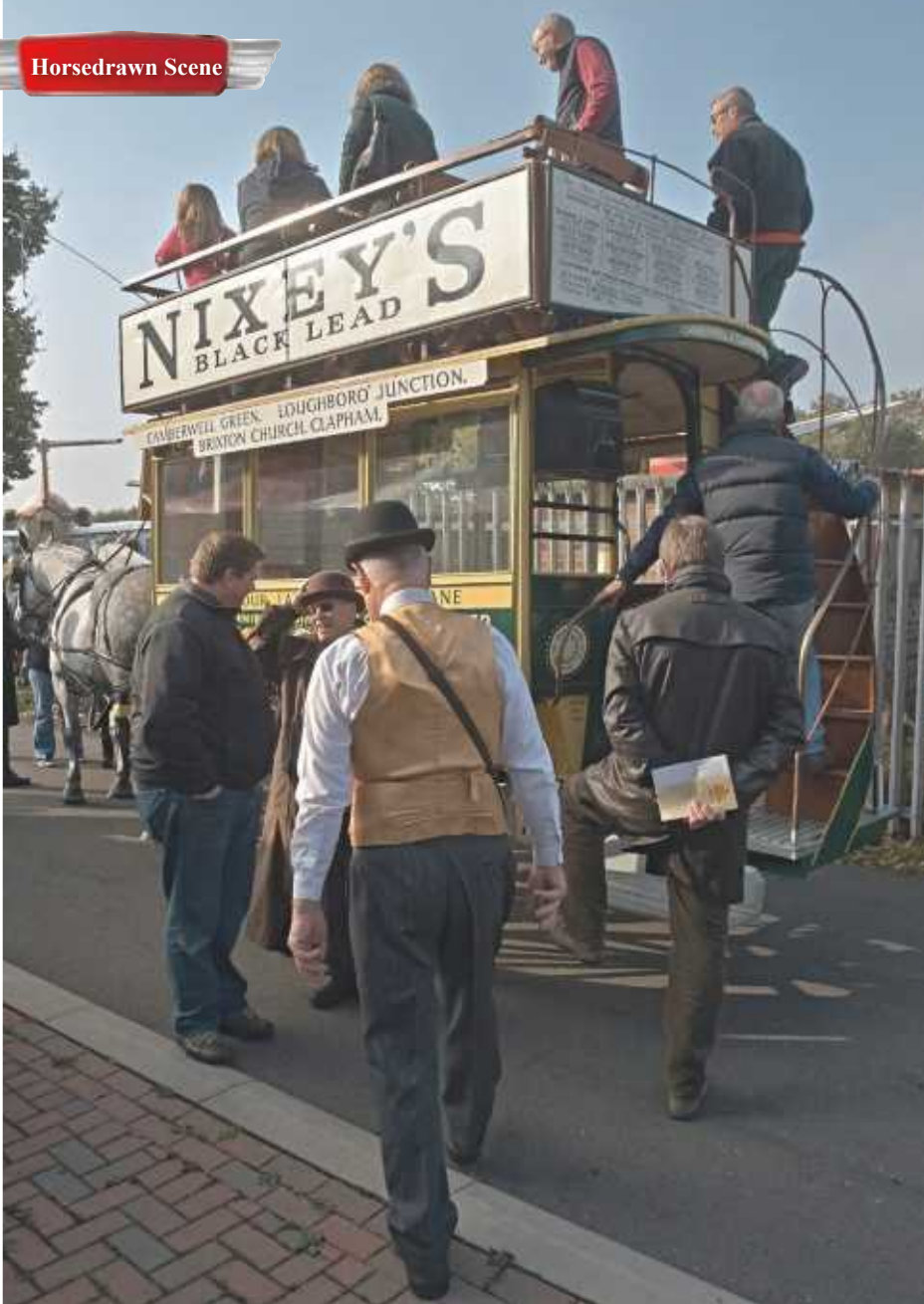
Done. Time for a trial run. As the queue of

eager passengers press forward, Tony has the job of explaining that they can't board just yet. Joanne starts the mountainous climb up into the driver's seat while holding two sets of reins, while I help clear people out of our intended path. Such is the nature of 'Elf and Safety' culture in Britain today, that Joanne and Tony have been told in no uncertain terms by the site management that galloping is not on the menu today. But more frustratingly, neither is a decent trot. I sense that both Beatrice and Grace would love to show the crowds what they can do, but the grooms have been ordered to walk beside the them, to help bring the bus to an emergency stop, should some highly unlikely event take place. Which of course it didn't.

### RISK, WHAT RISK?

Equally frustrating, I'm not allowed to take a load of jolly passengers for a quick blast around the site either, because nobody could write a 'Risk Assessment' to cover the possible outcomes. But, well away from the





**Left:** First trip is for London Bus Museum Trustees and the Andrews family – the descendants of the original bus owner. No pressure then?

museum, with Joanne by my side, I was able to experience what it was like to be perched-up there holding the reins, controlling a pair of horses able to move something like three tons of loaded horse-bus. The big surprise? I already knew how heavy the bus was unladen – I'd helped Tony push it – but when Beatrice and Grace put their shoulders to the collar, the instant torque pull away was impressive. Horses trained to harness tend to have their ears focussed to listen for the next instruction. True, the reins are important, but the actual command and the tone of voice by which commands are delivered is just as important.

"Stand" is the handbrake activation command. "Walk-on" is the clutch release mechanism. And "Trot-on" means "Come on Girls, let's go." This helps explain how hard it was for former horse bus drivers to learn to drive a motor bus, and why constant-torque Clarkson steam buses and Tilling-Stevens buses with petrol electric transmission were so popular in those early years of motorised passenger transport. Horses don't have pedals to operate them and motor buses don't understand voice commands! The most special moment? Watching Joanne turn the team around within a space designed for a modern bus with power steering. Inch perfect.

**Below:** Amazingly, the Star has a seating capacity for 26 people – not bad for a two horsepower bus.







**Above:** In the driving seat. Our Malcolm gets an idea of what it was like to drive a Victorian two-horse omnibus on a sunny day in Surrey. But in dark, wet noisy London streets? That's something else.



## CONCLUSION

So what's it like to drive a horse bus? Well, it's like... It's like driving a Routemaster with TWO engines, each controlled by a different bit of string, while you the driver, sit on the upper deck, exposed to the weather. All you have to do now is establish a good working relationship with each engine... And off you go.

You're now a fully qualified horse bus driver - once you've learned the route, that is...



**Above:** Scared of heights? This isn't a job for you, matey.

**Left:** Typical. Such is the 'Elf and Safety' culture in Britain today that even a horse bus could comfortably break this speed limit!

## \* SPECIAL THANKS

Special thanks to Tony Drewitt, the Trustees and the friendly bunch of volunteers at the London Bus Museum, the director of The Brooklands Museum, Allan Wynn and Joanne Moore and her team at Jem Carriages – and Beatrice and Grace, of course!

The London Bus Museum includes horse-bus exhibits and runs a real live horse-bus service at 'Transport Fest' each October. See [londonbusmuseum.com](http://londonbusmuseum.com) for details. Brooklands Museum is currently in the process of restoring the Finishing Straight to its pre-war condition by repositioning the World War II hanger next to the Bus Museum. There's no news of any specific commercial vehicle event yet, but it's still well worth a visit.



# ALSO AT TRANSPORT FEST 2016

**Below:** While the Star horse bus was being readied for duty outside, inside the Bus Museum, traders were getting ready for a busy day - under the wires of a London Trolleybus.



**Above:** From the Star horse bus to the Routemaster 'RM3' was displayed as part of the centrepiece outside the Brooklands Clubhouse.

**Below:** The staircase on the freshly-restored 1930s Thomas Tilling AEC double decker clearly shows off its exposed staircase horse bus heritage.



**Above:** End of an Era? RML2760 was last Routemaster built - in 1968. It was downhill all the way after that.



# Chigwell Urban District Council Ambulance Service

*John Harrison and Ian Strugnell examine the ambulance service offered by an Essex council, before the establishment of the National Health Service in 1948.*

To set the scene we should start by explaining that Chigwell Urban District Council covered the small towns and large villages of Buckhurst Hill, Chigwell and Loughton in Essex. The Council was formed in 1933, by merging Buckhurst Hill Urban District Council, Loughton Urban District Council and the parish of Chigwell, which was formerly part of Epping Rural District. Despite being named after the Chigwell part of the district, its offices were located in Old Station Road, Loughton where new offices were completed in 1935, now the site of Sainsbury's store.

The imposing offices had a fire and ambulance station alongside. Behind the fire station was the Engineer and Surveyor's Depot and to the west of this were four council houses, referred to as "cottages" in the CUDC minutes. These "cottages" had no road frontage. CUDC was merged into Epping Forest District in the local government reorganisation in 1974.

On the formation of CUDC in October 1933, it seems that there was no council-run ambulance service inherited from the previous councils. Apparently there was an arrangement with the St John's Ambulance Service at Walthamstow. Towards the end of 1933, the Ministry of Health asked CUDC what ambulance services there were. Enquiries were made of some neighbouring councils, to see if they would enter into temporary agreements for the use of their respective ambulances.

Replies were not encouraging, so inevitably, with the County Council also taking an interest, a conference was suggested. This eventually took place at Epping on 10 December 1934, but negotiations still continued. Meanwhile, CUDC was making plans for its own new public offices, and decided in March 1934 that the fire and ambulance station would be separate from the offices on adjoining land.

In May 1935, it was decided to take action for CUDC to have its own ambulance service and, a month later, tenders were invited for a six cylinder motor ambulance, with the necessary equipment and accommodation



Ambulance crew, James Smith and George Cole, are seen with Chigwell Urban District Council's ambulance, based on a Morris-Commercial chassis, CVW 220, which served from 1935, through wartime, until ambulance operation became a county council function, when the National Health Service was established in 1948.

for two stretcher-cases. Eleven tenders were received. The Council decided that the Public Health Committee should inspect three vehicles for which Patmore Bros had tendered, Bedford, Morris and Austin, apply to the Ministry of Health for loan sanction, place a contract if one of the vehicles was thought suitable and make arrangements to provide a service. Patmore's Garage was situated in the High Road, Loughton, where

Marks and Spencer is now located. It was taken over by Lambs Garages in 1969.

After the inspections, the Committee settled on the Morris de Luxe, at £396 painted Deep Brunswick Green with black wings, and also ordered 'Extras' – 1 sponge rubber bed with cover (£5/16/-); 2 pillows to match (@£1/16/-); 1 gong (£3/5/-); lettering (£3/10/-); 4 brown wool blankets, Army type, J & A Carters Ltd (@15/-) – costing a total with

discount of £17/4/9. The Clerk was to apply to Ministry of Health for loan sanction – £425 maximum repayable within ten years – and, on receiving such and getting Patmore Bros' firm quotation for the 'Extras', place a contract, with delivery likely to be about eight weeks.

He was also to apply for registration of the vehicle (Licence Duty nil) and to cover it with Municipal Mutual Insurance Ltd against the usual risks. The Medical Officer of Health was to obtain first-aid medical requisites for use in the ambulance (splints, bandages, scissors etc, including brandy or whiskey or sal volatile 8oz and oxygen, CO2 Sparklet outfit) at a maximum cost of £6. The Clerk reported to the Public Health Committee on 2nd September that the Ministry had sanctioned the loan and the contract had been placed, with medical requisites being obtained when delivery was expected.

The question of reciprocal arrangements with neighbouring authorities was raised again in late September, but it was decided not to proceed with discussions until Chigwell's service was established. The new ambulance was delivered in early November, and the Clerk reported to the Public Health Committee on 2nd December that it would be available for use by the 16th.

Initially, Patmore Bros supplied drivers 'on call' from their own staff. The Highways & Fire Committee arranged to advertise for an Ambulance Driver-Yardman, to assist with the service, and the Public Health Committee chairman and the relevant officers made the appointment, effective from 27th January, 1936. Various other arrangements were made as experience was gained, and at the 15 April 1936 Council Annual Meeting it was decided that a Fire Brigade and Ambulance Committee should be formed.

The Engineer and Surveyor was responsible for the day to day running and, from September, regularly reported statistics to the Committee: from 25th April to 25th August, there had been 33 accident calls and 19 medical cases; 471 miles were travelled and the average turn-out time was 3-3 minutes. The Medical Officer of Health was responsible for some equipment. The service was available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, but only for accident and urgent medical cases; it was found advantageous to have two men in the ambulance, especially at night. If a call was received while the ambulance was out on another one, there was an arrangement with a Mr Flack of Epping to cover if possible with his ambulance.

On the outbreak of war in September 1939, the council ambulance remained as a 'civilian'



service, the Civil Defence organisation having other vehicles for emergency use, which could also be called in to help as needed. In February 1944, the Engineer and Surveyor reported that the vehicle had covered 19,000 miles and was, by then, used more as a result of the greater scope of the service offered; he was authorised to have it thoroughly overhauled. In September 1945, he reported that the vehicle would have to

having five available meant a full service was maintainable with one absent through sickness or holiday. Agreement on a 48-hour working week resulted in seven men being required to provide two on duty at all times from 1st April 1947. Under the National Health Service Act 1946, Essex County Council became responsible for the ambulance service from July 1948, though it would seem that the former CUDC ambulance was kept at the council's premises for some time later.

Having looked at the history of the service, we will now 'meet' the two people appearing in the pictures, described in the album in which

the photos originally came as "Smith – Permanent driver" (left) and "Cole – Foreman & part time ambulance driver" (right); presumably "left" and "right" are from the photographer's perspective.

James Smith was born on 28th October 1894. He was married to Florence, whose role was described in 1939 as "unpaid domestic duties" – obviously meaning housewife. He commenced work as an Ambulance Driver/Yardman on 27th January

## ON THE OUTBREAK OF WAR IN SEPTEMBER 1939, THE COUNCIL AMBULANCE REMAINED AS A 'CIVILIAN' SERVICE

be out of service for one week for repairs, and he had arranged with Messrs Flack of Epping for the maximum possible night and day cover and readiness; nearby Woodford and Chingford Councils also agreed to help.

Post-war reorganisation resulted in a decision, in June 1946, to retain five council employees for the Ambulance Service, to work, on average, 68 hours per week. It would be possible to make do with only four, working on average 84 hours, but



1936, while living at 84 Princes Road, Buckhurst Hill. He and two other officers, presumably appointed at the same time, were given first-aid training by the Medical Officer of Health. In the minutes of 5th June 1938 he was described as "Ambulance Driver" and it was noted his wages had been increased from £3/1/- to £3/3/6 per week. Because he had to cover calls outside normal working hours, he was now living in one of the cottages at a rent of 10/- per week. It was noted he had proved very satisfactory. By 1st January, 1945, he was earning £3/16/- plus "war increase" of £1/4/-, making a total of £5. A restructuring proposed in a report considered on 3rd February, 1947, said "Smith could be senior man responsible for personnel and working." When the council's ambulance functions were transferred to Essex County Council, it was reported that Mr Smith had to vacate his cottage. We do hope

they found somewhere else for him to live! George C Cole was born on 8th June 1900 and was married to Edith May. Again, Edith's role was described as "unpaid domestic duties" in 1939. He was appointed General Working Foreman with Loughton Urban District Council at its meeting on 9th July,

## ■ ■ HIS WAGES WERE TO BE "£4 A WEEK, SUBJECT TO HIS REFERENCES PROVING SATISFACTORY"

1929, from a shortlist of four prepared by the Highways Committee. His wages were to be "£4 a week, subject to his references proving satisfactory". The first reference to George Cole in the minutes relating to the ambulance service is dated 10th July 1935, when he was described as being a "foreman". He was to be the tenant of one of the cottages but, at this time, he was living at 30, Woodland Road, Loughton and, so

that he could cover for night duties, a phone had to be installed in his house. He had to cycle to the depot when called out – such arrangements would clearly not be tolerated now when ambulances have strict call-out targets!

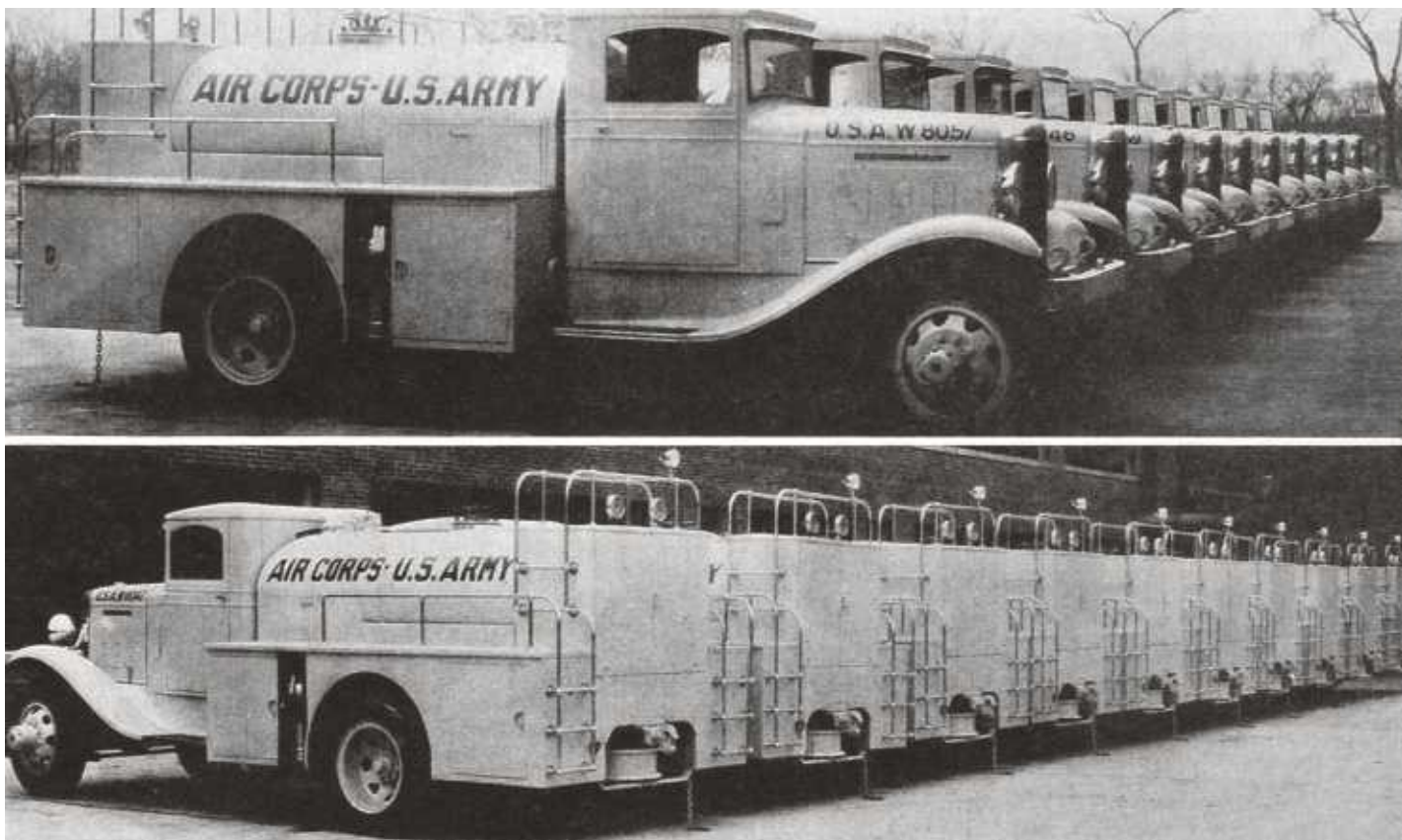
On 2 February 1937 it was recommended that Mr Cole should be considered as a senior member of the ambulance staff because of his organising ability and his retainer fee was to be increased from £6 to £10pa. In May 1942, CUDC applied to the Ministry of Labour and National Service for exemption from enrolment "by reason of essential duties connected with the maintenance of Public Service and Civil Defence". In August 1942, he was designated as an "Officer", as he was now in administrative charge of outside (manual) staff and his job title was changed from "Highways Superintendent" to "Works and Highways Superintendent". He remained working with CUDC until at least October 1950, but would obviously then have no longer been involved with the ambulance service.

Nowadays, ambulances are at our beck and call by ringing 999 (the phone number for the Chigwell Fire Brigade and Ambulance Service was Loughton 100 incidentally) or one can readily be obtained for discharge from hospital, if necessary. Until the outbreak of the war, the Chigwell ambulance was only used for accidents and medical emergencies. Those being discharged from hospital or being taken there in a non-urgent situation had to be transported by a private ambulance. Though the local authority made arrangements for this, patients were charged, though the council's minutes record that special consideration was given, if they said they were unable to pay. Details of a couple of situations where doctors tried to get the ambulance used for non-approved purposes are recorded in the minutes and the authority seems to have taken a hard line about its use in these circumstances.

Quite a lot of the discussion recorded in the minutes relates to the negotiation of reciprocal arrangements for ambulance use with nearby local authorities, arrangements for another authority's ambulance to attend if there were two emergencies at the same time. As these seem to have been difficult to negotiate, it is perhaps not surprising that when the National Health Service was established ambulance operation became a county council function in 1948.

Thanks are due to Mark Bailey for initially supplying the photos and to Epping Forest District Museum for permission to reproduce them.





# Marmon-Herrington

*Ever since lorries were invented, there was always a need for some of them to be able to 'go anywhere'. **Norman Chapman** looks at one of the American pioneers of all wheel drive, Marmon-Herrington, which had a few British connections along the way.*

## The History of Marmon-Herrington

The company formation can be traced as far back as 1851, when it was the Nordyke & Marmon Machine Company, which manufactured flour milling equipment. In 1900, the focus became automotive, with the manufacture of quality cars. During the Great Depression years of 1929-39 in America, there was little demand for motor cars and the company had to focus on something different. In 1931, that new focus was realised when lorries began to be manufactured in Indianapolis, Indiana.

This was after Walter C Marmon, of the Marmon Car Co, welcomed Col Arthur W S Herrington to the business. Herrington was an expert in all wheel drive (awd) engineering and, shortly afterwards, the company name was changed to Marmon-Herrington (M-H). The first contract was to

supply a fleet of 33 T1 model 4x4 aircraft refuelling tankers to the US Army Air Corps.

The new company then went on to build the 'A' and 'T' models of trucks, mainly for military applications. The 'A' models were 4x4, rated from 3 to 3½ tons gross; the

'T' models, which included the 'TH' were configured as 6x6, rated at 17 to 20 tons.

The Middle East was a lucrative market for the supply of large awd lorries for oil exploration, especially in Iraq. Additionally, M-H developed a special articulated bus

**Top:** Marmon-Herrington began in the lorry business with the supply of this fleet of T1 refuelling tankers for the US Army Air Corps.

**Right:** A 6x6 tipper working in demanding conditions.







**Above:** The 66 foot long articulated bus operated between Damascus and Baghdad.

**Left:** 1930s advert for, without a doubt, the surefooted Marmon-Herrington.



In England in the late 1930s, the UK equivalent of the US Fords were known as Fordsons and 3 to 4 tonners, converted with M-H 4x4 systems were trialled by the War Department. The trials were a success and the vehicles began production at Dagenham Motors of Alpertown, Middlesex. M-H also produced a large number of armoured cars and light tanks for the war effort, which were used in the North African Campaign by British and Allied troops.

In 1945, M-H introduced a number of new lorry models, which included the 'B' series. The range had a mix of 4x4 and 6x6 drive arrangements and gross weights started at between 4½ and 6 tons with the B10-4. The six wheel drive BD80-6 was the heaviest of the range, with a gross weight of just over 19 tons. Some models now had Cummins diesel engines fitted, denoted by the D in the type code. The 'TH' models already mentioned, were improved and some variants had diesel engines fitted.

for passengers and freight, which ran the desert route from Damascus in Syria to Baghdad in Iraq. The coach trailer had luxury accommodation for 36 passengers and was operated by Nairn Transport Company.

Later, the company experimented with producing a number of diverse awd vehicles for military use in World War II. Most were powered by Hercules six cylinder petrol engines, while others were conversions of various Ford of America chassis. The key component was the M-H designed transfer box which, for a lot of applications, was mated to Ford's own Warner T9 four-speed gearbox.



**Above:** Fordson 3-4 tonner with M-H drive system going through War Department trails in North Wales in 1938.

## Diversification

Just after the war, the company manufactured a small delivery van, known as the 'DELIVR-ALL', which was cutting edge for its time. The van was fitted with a transversely mounted engine and gearbox which made it front wheel drive. The benefit of this set up allowed the cab to have a low step entrance and a walk-through design. The rear area was also low for loading/unloading, which all added up to less driver fatigue. From a maintenance standpoint, the entire power unit, controls and front end, below the windscreen could be quickly removed. The van, which was made until 1952, appealed to the postal service, milkmen, laundry services, and the local parcel delivery market.

## Bus production

M-H was also known for its electric trolleybuses, which were built under licence by H V Welles, Coachbuilders of Windsor, Ontario, in Canada. The company also bought the rights from Ford to produce two sizes of normal road-going buses powered by Ford V8 petrol engines.

## More demand for AWD systems

In peacetime there was a big demand for all wheel drive, so the company set out its stall as a provider of these systems, which could be fitted to all makes of vehicles. Ford, now a trading partner, supplied station wagons and lightweight lorry chassis for conversions. The likes of General Motors, Dodge, International and Chevrolet which, along with other manufacturers, had mainly 4x4 modifications carried out to selected chassis. The company



Above: Canadian Ford chassis as far as the eye can see, most with M-H awd systems. The lorries were being prepared for action in World War II.



A modified Ford pick-up with awd capability, towing a small gun for the US Army.



Above: World War II halftrack built on a Ford chassis. (M-H archive).

changed the design of its axles on a number of occasions, to keep them state of the art. On axles for lightweight vehicles, M-H favoured the split axle casing design, while on heavy-duty applications, the hypoid type was fitted.

## The Rhino

1954 saw the introduction of the most unusual Marmon-Herrington ever, the Rhino. This was a one person, go anywhere amphibious vehicle, which was designed with oil field, logging, agricultural and military applications in mind. When travelling on expanses of water, the vehicle was Hydrojet-propelled, through nozzles at the rear, which rotated to steer the vehicle. Unlike other amphibious vehicles which, according to the designer, had traction problems when coming out of the water, the Rhino was able to progress across the soft mud at the waters edge. This was thanks to the hemispheroidal wheels which were made





Above: Two types of Ford lorry, but all with M-H 4x4 systems, in use by New Zealand troops during World War II.



## Live Power and Traction in Every Wheel

When you want Marmon-Herrington All-Wheel-Drive Trucks are designed specifically to meet your needs—power, speed, safety and economy. They are all-terrain trucks with the most advanced drive—powerful, more efficient than any other.

The reason, of course, is in Marmon-Herrington's All-Wheel-Drive. With live power and traction in every wheel—best wheel pulling, best pushing—Marmon-Herrington All-Wheel-Drive Trucks are able to move back-breaking payloads through slush, mud, sand and snow, up steep hills and over rough grades... and do it with economy, no wasted time.



On highways, this same All-Wheel-Drive power and traction enables Marmon-Herrington Trucks to operate in greatly increased speeds on wet and slippery pavements, on rock, gravel, sand and dirt roads, around sharp turns, up and down all grades with maximum safety of shifting—smooth, quiet starting and stopping. Then, even under normal operating conditions, Marmon-Herrington All-Wheel-Drive Trucks speed delivery, reduce costs and offer important savings in time and money.

For 1950, Marmon-Herrington offers three new, improved Heavy-Duty All-Wheel-Drive Trucks—more rugged, more powerful, more efficient than ever before.

Important features include: 4-wheel or 6-wheel drive—greater approach angle—low center of gravity—wide range of gear ratios—auto, safety, service steering—powerful, positive grip—no brakes—can't give separation up to 40,000 pounds—and many other operating advantages.

Discover how these great new Heavy-Duty All-Wheel-Drive Trucks, or Marmon-Herrington All-Wheel-Drive converted Ford Trucks, can solve your every transportation problem. For full information, see your nearby Marmon-Herrington dealer, or write the factory direct.

MARION HERRINGTON CO., INC. - INDIANAPOLIS, IN.

**MARMON-HERRINGTON** All-Wheel-Drive Trucks



## NEWEST THING ON WHEELS for Home Deliveries

THE MAN who delivers your milk, bakery goods, laundry, dry cleaning or department store purchases has a back-breaking job. That he must load his truck, packing so his merchandise, filling each case, carting on packages and stacking them high in the back, not with ready accessibility for each delivery. Then he starts out, making hundreds of stops and starts on each trip—making hundreds of trips around the town—creating discomfort to your back too.

Now he can have a vehicle, specially designed to conserve his strength, boost his delivery, reduce accident and speed up deliveries. The new Marmon-Herrington DELIVR-ALL was designed and built after years of research, time and machine studies, and intensive truck body and axle engineering done after large scale tests.



body and axle engineering done after large scale tests, to provide the utmost in maneuverability for the driver, and in dependability and economical operation for the company. Exceptionally low floor level the full length of the vehicle, made possible by front wheel drive, extra-wide

body and axle opening doors offer large entry capacity, load workability and the greatest ease of entrance and exit. Driving controls are greatly simplified, the operation from standing or seated position. Improved visibility provides greater safety.

And even, in addition to all these advantages, from the maintenance standpoint, the ease of power and control unit is simple and easily detachable for servicing. An extra power unit is a fact will allow for continuous preventive maintenance. Start wherever you want for order parking, better handling in traffic, ability to make more stops, in less time, less fuel, less wear, and less noise.

Marmon-Herrington DELIVR-ALL will be ready soon. Write for information.

**MARMON-HERRINGTON**  
INDIANAPOLIS 7, INDIANA

Above left: The B Series had the option of petrol or diesel engines and the range all had full air brakes. Above right: M-H sales advert for the 'Delivrr-All' front wheel drive van, which was very popular in 1950s America.

from aluminium and also had narrow rubber tyre sections for road travel. Only two Rhino prototypes were ever built.

## M-H in France

In 1957, the Ford M-H collaboration was further developed, with the formation of a separate company, based at Villiers-le-Bel, France. The function was to convert contemporary Ford lorries to four wheel drive capability for the French Army. One model was the Thames Trader forward control, to which Ford of Britain had added the M-H option of all wheel drive to a small number of units.

When the M-H company was sold off in 1963, this French part became SA Marmon Bocquet and continued making awd military

lorries. One vehicle in particular was the Simca Unic Marmon Bocquet (SUMB) which was fitted with the M-H 4x4 system.

## US Class 8 truck manufacture.

Apart from the military, fire and rescue and public utility markets, demand for awd vehicles was reduced. By the late 1950s, in the USA, M-H decided to build a COE Class 8 truck which would have double rear wheel drive only. This decision was made because the management thought that new opportunities could be plentiful, with the building of the new Interstate Highway system. M-H had the engineering expertise to join this new sector of the market. The new truck was given the name of the Heavy Duty Truck (HDT) and could be bought with

the option of a day cab or sleeper box for long haul.

M-H, shrewdly, formed an agreement with the Caterpillar company to use the newly-introduced Cat 1673 truck engine in the HDT and sell it exclusively through the multitude of Cat dealers. The HDT was designed with the owner/operator in mind and came with numerous other options. Along with the Caterpillar motor, Cummins and Detroit Diesel engines were offered later. There were three gearbox options; a Fuller five-speed manual, a Fuller ten-speed Roadranger and a Spicer 12-speed.

## The end and a new beginning

Competing in a tough marketplace, with the likes of Mack, Kenworth, Peterbilt and



International Harvester, by 1963, it became apparent that this leading truck and component manufacturer was struggling. The very disappointing sales of the new COE only amounted to about 20 vehicles. In the same year, the M-H company was sold to the Pritzker Venture Capital Group. The intentions of the new owner were that vehicle manufacture would cease, however, the transmission components part of the business would continue.

- 1: More detail of the van set up.
- 2: Trolleybuses were used in a number of US States, with this example operated in San Francisco.
- 3: A 1950s sales ad, with information that M-H had recently bought the rights from Ford of America to produce normal road-going buses.
- 4: All types of Ford chassis were given the M-H treatment, as this 1950s brochure demonstrates.

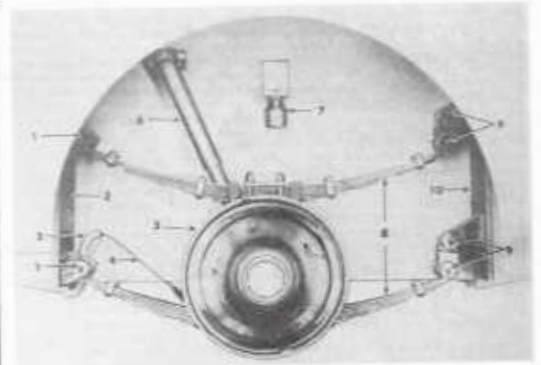
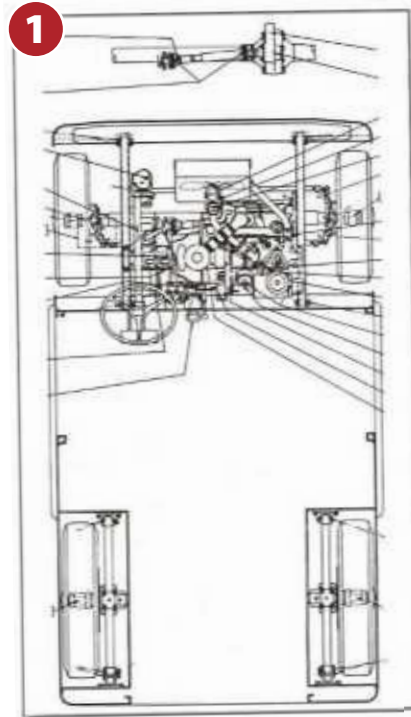
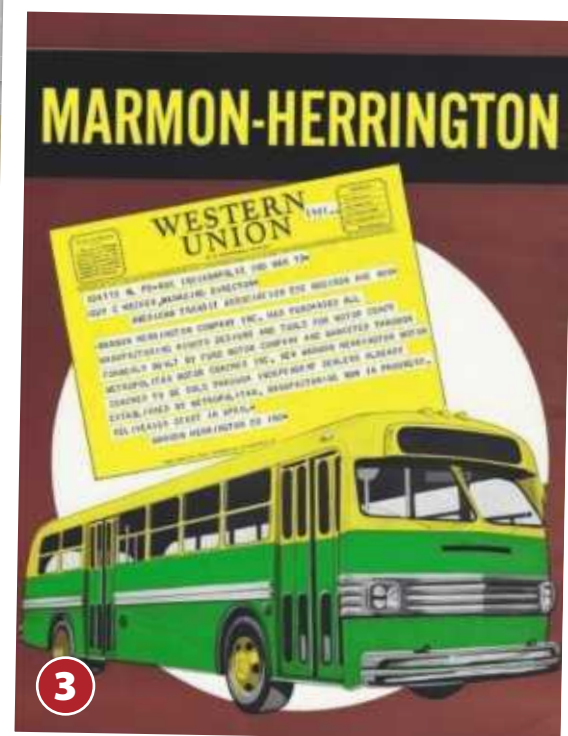


Fig. 4-10 The compact rear suspension responsible for the low cargo floor.



## Marmon-Herrington Series All-Wheel-Drive Fords

**Sure-footed performance off the highway—or on**



## High-Performing Models

4-wheel-drive + 6-wheel-drive = S.V.W. from  
\$2,309 lbs. to \$2,500 lbs. Two great engines: 100 hp, V-6, 75 hp, 3.0L.



**4 Wheel Drive Models.**—There are five Landshelter models in the Hyman-Stratagore "R" Series, including three three-wheel models. Gross weight is weight in cargo less 2,500 lbs. (i.e. 11,100 lbs.—wheelbase) from 3.27' to 3.54'. Class of 1972 100 kg. 5-6 to 95 kg. 6-wheelers range. 8 forward models and 2 reverse in all models.



**6-Speed Drive Shifts**... The five automatic-drive models in the "W" series are empowered specifically for the increased truck F.W. classes. Frame is lengthened and reinforced and overall height added. All models have a 3.9L, 212,500-hp, fuel-injected by the 100 hp. Ford V-8 engine. Wheelbases range from 144" to 160".



**4-Wheel-Drive Commercial Models—**1994—There are no body models in this category. Customizations— all standard variations of Ford model F-4. These include F-Series, Ford and Inter-Axis—also the Ranger passenger-range vehicle. Wheelbase is 114" and 121". Light box chassis of 30 hp. Customizations: 1994-95. Visit website.

more powerful. Maxima-Flintington All-Wheel Drive Trucks are available in "S" Series (Base F-4) and "SE" Series (F-2) models—0.2 M, up to 21,000 lbs., up to 115 hp, high-torque engine.





Left: The very unusual 'go anywhere' Marmon-Herrington Rhino. Only two prototypes were built. Right: A Thames Trader FC with M-H 4x4 conversion. (Ford archive).



Above: Close up of the driven front axle of the Trader M-H.

Above: The French Connection. An ex-military 'SUMB' in restored condition, seen at a UK vintage rally. Left: Four names are always better than one – the grille badge from the SUMB.



## Hottest Rig on the Highway. Marmon-Herrington HDT



If you want the bold truth about a tractor—ask the man who drives it. The Marmon-Herrington HDT has more guts and stamina, more reserve power—in fact more of everything a rig should have. That's the way it was designed—it's no accident.

We took our nearly 60 years experience in building heavy duty transportation equipment—studied it thoroughly with the best engineering and components and came up with a tractor that's operating consistently at low cost per mile, at faster average speeds. You get faster turn-around, better equipment utilization, and lower maintenance costs.

Marmon-Herrington is building profit faster through economy, maintenance, and efficiency. It's the bottom rig on the highway!

Ask your drivers what they hear about the Marmon-Herrington HDT. You'll find you're missing out on a new way to increase profits. Let's get together.

**MARMON-HERRINGTON COMPANY, INC.**

1611 West Washington Street • Coda 321 • 903-5411  
Indianapolis 5, Indiana



Above: The iconic M-H badge which is still used today on transmission components.

Left: A sales brochure for the steel-cabbed HDT from 1961, which proved to be the swansong for Marmon-Herrington truck production.

## Today

The Marmon-Herrington name is alive and well and based in Louisville, Kentucky. The company still manufactures light and heavy-duty axles and transfer cases. The global Berkshire-Hathaway group own the majority of shares in M-H, which also includes the Sisu axle company in Finland.

# STAND AND DELIVER

**Mike Forbes** has selected pictures from the Chris Hodge 'Stilltime' archive showing the types of vehicle which used to deliver to and from our shops.

It could be argued that all lorries are delivery vehicles. After all, they have to deliver their loads, whether it's raw materials to a factory or finished goods to a customer, grain or aggregate in a bulk tipper to a site or works, palletised boxes or bags to a warehouse. But here we're looking at the sort of vehicle which we would have seen outside a local shop, either delivering goods to go on the shelves or picking them up, to take to the customer's home.

These days, most of us take nearly everything we buy, from clothes, food and other household products, to gardening materials, home with us from the 'store' – they're not shops any more. Perhaps heavier items, like furniture, white goods and building supplies might be delivered for us, but this was once the norm. We're talking about the old days here, so we can be 'non-pc' and say that the housewife could only carry so much in her shopping bag, whereas now we can fill the car boot.

Perhaps a bigger change, with regard to the sort of vehicles in these pictures, is the way that producers of most goods, food in particular, no longer deliver consignments to each shop as they are ordered, but bulk deliveries are made to 'RDCs' – regional distribution centres (unless they have a new name now?) – from where consolidated orders are then taken to the retailers – in an equally large vehicle. 'Economies of Scale' is the term used. We all want our goods at the cheapest price, and buying and moving them in bulk saves money.

Of course, there were wholesalers – some of which still exist as 'cash and carry' warehouses – whose operations were much the same as the RDCs, although usually not serving just one chain of shops, and the delivery vehicles were definitely smaller.

There are few 'van salesmen' left, who would go round from shop to shop, taking orders and delivering them on the spot. At one time, this was the way many small shops received the majority of their supplies on

a regular basis. No doubt congestion and parking restrictions have played their part in the move away from such a system.

There was also a time when most local shops – not just bakers and milkmen – offered a delivery service to customers' homes. These days, many corner shop owners will still run a van, mainly to pick up goods from the cash and carry, but it's likely to be plain white, no names or liveries, probably something to do with security – or just cost!

So let's take a nostalgic look at some of the vehicles we would have seen in our streets, delivering to and from the shops. Most – but not all – were vans of some sort, loose-loaded with orders, which would often be 'barrowed' into the customer's premises. There might not be the 'romance of the road' a eight-wheeler driver would remember, but anyone who has done this sort of work will have tales to tell; trouble parking, getting into the shop past the customers and so on.

In my days with 'RWA Transport', I did







**Above:** Another Karrier Gamecock at a show, surrounded by the stands of British vehicle makers, but it's left hand drive and the mix of languages suggests Brussels. There's no mistaking the product it will be used to deliver. Similar vehicles were operated in Britain as well. (CHC aab428)

**Left:** Here's a classic delivery vehicle. The diesel-powered Karrier Gamecock chassis, probably a 5-tonner has been fitted with a Locomotors box van body, and photographed on the bodybuilder's stand at a commercial vehicle show around 1960. It carries advertising for 'Golden Harvest' digestive biscuits, 'containing pure butter' on the body sides, and a small panel standing proud of the headboard. (CHC aab426)

a few 'shopping runs' with a Bedford TK flat, delivering four tons of Donald Cook's canned fruit and veg to umpteen branches of Dewhurst the butchers around the South-east. There was this time when...

Some of these pictures would fit equally well into one of the other themes we've looked at in 'Scenes Past' features, brewery, dairy, high street names, Luton vans, light vans, and they're not all 'on the job', being at shows or on test, while they cover quite a range of types, but then, perhaps that's only to be expected.



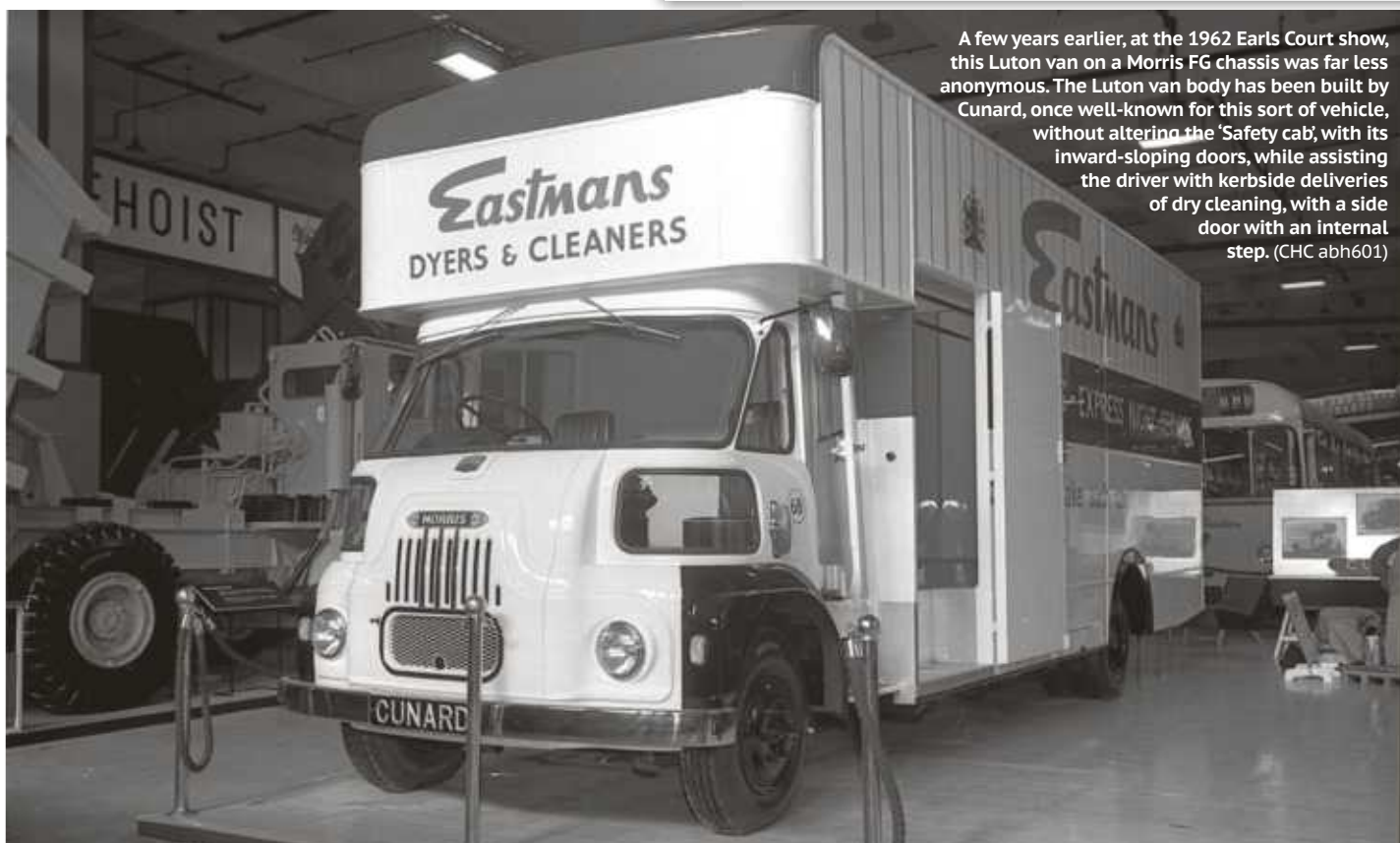
**Above:** Another left hand drive vehicle destined for Belgium, for the 'Belga' brewery, but seen in Harrow – note the schoolboys and school outfitters – on test from the Watford manufacturer. The 6 Ton Scammell Scarab looks quite different with dual headlights, but not unfamiliar, as a similar vehicle has been preserved. The Scarab is squeezing past the Fordson ET6 of fruit merchants, W G Nash & sons of Harrow, as it delivers to a shop, while a coal lorry and a Morris PV can be glimpsed further down the road. (CHC abb149)

**Right:** No smutty remarks – we all know that Berlei made ladies' underwear – but this is a typical product which would have been delivered to retailers' shops for many years. Here are two Commer QX C Series Mk III, 818 BPP and 338 EBH (Buckinghamshire, 1957 and 1958). The long wheelbase chassis are fitted with box van bodies, with side doors, through which one being loaded with parcels from a Lister works truck. It makes a great picture, but not very efficient. (CHC abb098)

**Below:** A smaller Berlei delivery van, photographed at the same time, a small Luton van, based on a long wheelbase Morris LD diesel chassis-scuttle, this time being loaded from a 'pumper-truck' – quite modern for its day. Another picture shows the Morris, NBL 468 (Berkshire, 1956), was 'racked out', with a low rear step, which explains why no loading bank and parcels being loaded individually, but easier for the driver at the delivery point. (CHC abb099)



**Right:** Following a theme, here is another coachbuilt van – that's probably not a Luton, but extra headroom in the cab – a '660 Walkover Van, built by coachbuilder Walkers on a Morris FGK chassis scuttle. It's a good job it's at a show – the 1965 commercial show at Glasgow – with details on the screen, as it's otherwise fairly anonymous. No doubt a branch of the 'Co-op' would make good use of its high-volume carrying capacity, delivering furniture and the like to its customers. (CHC abk793)



A few years earlier, at the 1962 Earls Court show, this Luton van on a Morris FG chassis was far less anonymous. The Luton van body has been built by Cunard, once well-known for this sort of vehicle, without altering the 'Safety cab', with its inward-sloping doors, while assisting the driver with kerbside deliveries of dry cleaning, with a side door with an internal step. (CHC abh601)





**Above:** Here are some delivery vans at a wholesaler's premises, Martindale's, the London-based wholesale chemists. The warehouse, with at least two storeys, is sited in a backstreet, with limited access. Just leaving is an early Morris PV – surely one of the most basic vehicles ever, an unusual triumph of practicality over style – HXY 755 (London, 1946-9), passing a later example, NGF 241 (London, 1952-4), without an opening driver's screen, and a Ford E83W, all typical delivery vans of their era. (CHC aba479)



Delivery vehicles have not always all been vans. Security and weather protection are just two factors, but sometimes a platform lorry used to be considered more suitable. Here is one in the attractive cream and red Schweppes livery, a Bedford TK 5-tonner, 2054 MF (Middlesex, 1961-2), taking part in a Lorry Driver of the Year round, believed to be in Portsmouth. (CHC abh223)



**Left:** Here are another two Schweppes lorries, taking part in a different LDOY round, probably on the outskirts of London. These are older Bedford TAs, 319 HMG and 283 AMK (Middlesex, 1956 and 1954), with bigger wheels, giving a higher loading/unloading platform. (CHC abh578)

**Below:** Here's yet another of those Schweppes Bedford TAs, actually 'on the job', delivering to a London hotel – amazingly through the front door – somewhere like the Fulham or Gloucester Road, by the looks of it. Showing the 'fun and games' of multiple deliveries, the driver has had to manage to squeeze between the bus stop and the Austin A35 van. He's using the height of the curb to help unload, while his mate has a fag, over by the motor-cycle parked on the pavement. R H Russell, Electrical Contractor, is not looking after his A35 van, 952 RMK (Middlesex, 1958-9), as it appears to have no headlamp glass (or tax disc!). (CHC abe620)



**Right:** It's a bit posed, but the driver of the early Austin 152 Omnivan (the Austin-badged version of the Morris J2, which later adopted this style of grille), VNF 915 (Manchester, 1958), is picking up his deliveries from Harrison's. This 'Spar' shop has become an early self-service 'supermarket'. We can see shoppers queuing up to pay inside. The displays of Heinz tins in the window and the prices on the posters take you back; Nescafé – 2/6, Farmhouse Cheshire Cheese – 3/6, Sugar 4 lbs for 2/4, John West Salmon – 4/- and Lean Bacon – 2/11: those were the days! (CHC abe848)



**Above left:** This anonymous A35 van is picking up a shop order from the wholesaler's; Silver Queen lard, Cerebos Salt, Nestlé's Cream, Mary Baker Sponge Mix, Spratt's Dog Biscuits and Red Heart Dog Food and more. The Austin A55 next to it has the boot open too, while a Bedford K or M Type with open sides is loaded in the background. (CHC abe846) **Above right:** A more traditional branch of Harrison's, for Grocery and Confectionery. The old-fashioned signs are still there, Brooke Bond Tea, Park Drive, Bird's Eye, Spar and more Christmas offers. The jolly driver is coming back to his sadly unidentified Austin K4 'Loadstar', with interesting rear and side openings with canvas curtains and tailboard, to secure the loose load. It is lettered for Wright & Green Ltd, Food Distributors of Manchester. There's a Commer Cob parked on the pavement, TNE 825 (Manchester, 1956), which might be the 'shop van'. (CHC abe854)



**Above:** Here's something rather special which, surprisingly, didn't catch on, although the Dennis 'Paravan' was hailed as a big step forward at the time, with its diagonal nearside door with a low step. This is probably the first development vehicle, 8539 NO (Essex, 1958), in the livery of Essex Carriers of South Benfleet, who it is believed had a hand in the design, on test from the Guildford factory on Surrey trade plates, 103 PE. (CHC abc251)





Above: Another type which failed to make much of an impression on the market – it certainly doesn't seem to impress the lady on the balcony – was the Trojan forward control 20-25 cwt van from the late 1950s. The Trojan badge is smaller than the 'Perkins' rings on this example from the Brazil's Sausages fleet, 305 FPP (Buckinghamshire, 1958), with its non-Trojan bare aluminium coachwork lacking even the Trojan grille. (CHC abb104)



Above: Presumably 'Lin-Can' was short for the Lincolnshire Cannery or similar, as seen on this new-looking Seddon 'Seven-tonner' outside the Seddon works. LEG 39 (Peterborough, 1960), would probably be more likely to deliver to wholesalers' warehouses than individual shops, but the skirts on the stylish platform body offer space to advertise the company's products. (CHC abe182)



**Above:** Still a well-known name in office supplies, Ryman delivered office furniture, equipment and machines with this Austin-badged 701 or FFK, 7045 BY (Croydon, 1960-61), with a box van body, which was fitted with a tail-lift – quite advanced for its day. Notice the 'Museum' London telephone number. (CHC abd960)

**Left:** We're all 'non-pc' this month, with a picture promoting smoking. Well, when this vehicle was new, there was no problem with that. Probably a contract vehicle from British Road Services or another well-known haulier, 345 EXO (London, 1962-3), was on one of the smallest Bedford TK chassis, with six-stud wheels and a four cylinder engine, but then, cigarettes don't weigh that much. Notice the little window on the cantrail of the box body, so the driver can see when he's shut inside, making up deliveries. (CHC abd103)



**Above Left:** Here's one which missed our meat transport feature a couple of years ago. Market Transport was based in Balham, SW12, but worked out of Smithfield, delivering to butchers around the capital. Platform bodies with insulated containers were favoured for years by operators like this for some reason. This Thames Trader, 420 SMC (Middlesex, 1958-9) was another taking part in that London round of the LDOY competition when photographed. (CHC abh581)





**Above:** Contrasting with the likes of the Market Transport 'Trader', this Bedford 'S' Type has a van body, coachbuilt on a chassis-scuttle. With its chrome bumper and air horns, one can only think it's purely for style. London N1-based 'The British Drug Houses Ltd', or BDH as it was known, registered EJD 436 in West Ham in late 1951 or early 1952, to run alongside earlier Bedford 'OL's in its fleet. (CHC abk100)



**Above Left:** We couldn't have a feature on delivery vans without a Transit, could we? Here is an early 35 cwt 'twin-wheel' chassis, with Dormobile-built Luton body at the Earls Court show in 1966. There's no livery to admire, but those rear light cluster are 'evocative of the era', aren't they – seen on many Ford commercials in the late 1960s? (CHC abk432) **Above Right:** Possibly at the same show or the next, here's another 35 cwt Transit, this time with the integral 'parcels van' body, built by Garner (the name just visible on the front number plate). The idea that the driver could 'walk-through' between the cab and load-space, and out of the sliding nearside door to make deliveries was seen as ideal for multiple drops, in the days when the vehicle could actually be parked by the kerb, outside the delivery address. Another 'blast from the past' is the Godfrey Davis Rent A Van livery, dark blue, as I recall. (CHC abh340)

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**Above:** A frequent visitor to Blackheath for over 20 years was Forrests' tatty old Foden S83 six-wheeled curtain-sider, TUT 755S (Leicester, 1977), wearing Foden works livery. In more recent years, it seems to have been towed there on a rigid bar in a semi-derelict condition, missing its nearside screen. Here it is seen at Easter 1995, in company with an old trailer.

# Showmen On The Heath - Part 2

**Allan Bedford** continues with his selection of pictures of the fairground transport seen the fun fairs held on Blackheath, taken over a period of over 46 years.

**B**lackheath in South-east London straddles the Royal Borough of Greenwich and the Borough of Lewisham, but was once part of Kent. Over the years, the Heath has been a regular venue for many travelling fun fairs and, especially in more recent times, circuses.

This open land has been the scene of many historic gatherings over the centuries, and has been enjoyed by many generations of Londoners for leisure and recreation, whether for a stroll in the open air or more strenuous sports of various kinds, plus all sorts of organised entertainments, like fireworks in November.

The vehicles used to transport the fairground rides and equipment – and similarly circus apparatus – have always appealed to lorry enthusiasts. Since the



**Left:** A nice traditional noticeboard displayed at the fair in 1999 with that old Foden S83 in the background.



**Right:** Contrasting with the Forrests Foden six-wheeld S83, this rigid eight version, COY 557T (London, 1978), had just received a repaint in time for the Spring Bank Holiday fair in 1996.

days when steam was the power source for vehicles and rides, the majority of the lorries used have tended to be second-hand, older types, often adapted for their new role, pulling trailers and caravans as well, but often nicely painted in interesting new liveries, disguising their origins, to a greater or lesser extent.

Allan has been visiting Blackheath and the fun fairs there for many years, taking photographs from 1970 until recent years, which he is sharing with us in these pages.



**Above:** Around 19 years old and still looking smart, this 1966 ERF LV-cabbed eight-wheeled frame truck, RXC 105E (Greater London, 1967), was seen at Blackheath at Easter 1995. Notice the 'London Lorry Ban' exemption sign prominent on the grille.



**1:** By 1996, an Ergo cab surviving in this condition was rare, but very welcome. This immaculate Mandator tractor, fitted with a 'chariot'-style body and generator, was first registered in 'Leyland country', BTD 266L (Lancashire, 1973).

**2:** A make seldom encountered on the fairgrounds, again suffering from rust-prone cabs, was Seddon Atkinsons. This Hampshire-registered 400 Series six-wheeler, UOT 147T, was seen in May 1996.

**3:** Zippo's Circus has been a frequent visitor to the Heath in more recent decades. In April 1997, the set-up included 'Generator No 5' on this impressive AEC six-wheeler, WJW 706G (Wolverhampton, 1969-70). Its Lithuanian 'Keeper' was very proud of his charge, pointing out its long service.



**Right:** Supporting Zippo's visit to the Heath in 1998, 'The Duo Biddall' travelled in style in this ex-Lawleys of Stoke on Trent 1966 ERF LV box van, HVT 753D. It is now to be seen on the rally field, fully signwritten as it looked when new.

**Below left:** Rawlins' compressor units were always impressive. A good example from more recent years is seen here, based on an ERF E10 tractor unit, G791 XLW (London, 1989-90), which visited for Easter 1999 carrying a cast nameplate 'Perseverance' from an earlier era. The dog appears to be in charge of the washing in the background.

**Below right:** A small circus came in September 1999, the transport for which included a Ford 'R' Series Marshall bodied service bus, RMD 303R (London, 1977), suitably converted to living accommodation, complete with leaded glass windows!



**Above:** A second small circus arrived in October 1999, which was using this ex-BBC Dodge 100 Series 'Commando', NYN 306Y (London 1982-3). This vehicle may well have parked close by when with the Corporation, in conjunction with the outside broadcast units for the London Marathon.

**Left:** In May 1999, a small fair gathered next to All Saints, the 'Church on the Heath', with the village shops to the left. Another church roof appeal must have been in progress at the time, judging by the scaffolding and stacked tiles. This early ERF B Series eight-wheeler, OAV 733R, carries a registration issued at Peterborough in 1976.





**Above left:** This late LV-cabbed Gardner 180-powered ERF 68G, OOD154M (Devon, 1973), was seen with Hatwell's Waltzer on the Heath in 1998 and again in May 2000, as here. Its Devon registration suggests that it was another ERF supplied through dealer Frank Tucker of Exeter.

**Above right:** The nearside of the Hatwells ERF, seen in 1998, with the very neat cut-out in its bodyside for an AEC radiator for cooling the engine of the generator within.



**Left:** All of 19 years before seeing it again on the Heath, in August 1979, here is OOD 154M in its prime. 'Yogi Bear' from the fleet of Sandfords of Banwell, North Somerset, was snapped in West Street, Erith, while the driver took lunch at Mario's Café across the road, in company with the driver of the AEC Mercury parked behind. The chassis-cab of the ERF vehicle was still to be found on the Winkleigh Aerodrome three years ago.

**Below left:** Borrowing three trims from old 'D1000 Series' cabs and a set of wheel trims has transformed the appearance of this later Ford Cargo four-wheeled van, KYT 252X (London 1982-3), seen at the Easter 2000 event.

**Below right:** Setting up is in progress in May 2000. This very traditional 'gallopers' ride had travelled from Sussex on and towed by this nicely lined out ERF 'E' Series six-wheeler, F423 CEW (1988-9), originally registered in Peterborough.





**Right:** Several ex-Sainsburys Atkinson Borderer tractor units were to be seen on the fairgrounds, over a period of 12-15 years. This one, HYT 651N (Central London, 1975), fitted with a short box body, was a regular and, by May 2000, towed this very distinctive trailer, still signwritten 'Here, There and Everywhere' for its previous removals company operator.

**Below left:** The striking livery cannot disguise the origins of this ex-Highways Authority Foden S83-based six-wheeled gritter, BHV 350T (London, 1979), seen in May 2000.

**Below right:** A nicely-presented ERF 'C' Series unit and articulated trailer caravan, with extending side, seen in May 2000. The 1982-3 Devon registration, WDV 294X, again suggests another Frank Tucker sale. It is next to a Bedford TL box van, XAU 82Y (Nottingham, 1983).



On site ticket sales for the October 2000 circus were provided by this artic trailer, with its small Bedford TL tractor unit, GUV 301X (London, 1982-3), positioned closed to the entrance of Greenwich Park.







**Left:** Billy Smart's Circus arrived in October 2000. Among the performers' transport was this Czech Avia (A20?), a make with a very complex history not often seen in Britain. **Right:** One of Forrests' other long-serving frame trucks, complete with generator behind the cab, was this 1985-6 Luton-registered ERF 'C' Series eight-wheeler, C912 EMJ, seen at Easter 2001.



A very fine 1989-90 ERF E8 six-wheeler, with canvas-topped van bodywork, G104 OOD, again with Devon connections, seen at Easter 2001.



**Above:** A typical fairground conversion on a six-wheeled Foden tractor unit, D636 YPC (Surrey, 1986-7). By Easter 2001, when it was photographed, L200 pick-ups, websites and mobile phone numbers had appeared on the scene.



**Above:** A quick walk across Shooters Hill Road, via the convenient pedestrian-controlled lights, would bring you to Zippo's Circus in 2001. The jolly colours looked good, even on a dull March day, on this Ford 'D' Series artics unit, fitted with an unusual sleeper cab, SEG 203X, another Peterborough issue, from 1982-3.



**Above:** New to Maidstone & District in 1936, along with the unsuccessful batch of Bristols, one of which was seen last time, were some CKO registered Leyland TD4 chassis, with Weymann L24/24R lowbridge bodies, like the one seen here. Several of these vehicles were sold in 1950 to North Western, based at Stockport, and this could be one of them. Alongside is HKR 42, a 1946 Bristol K6A with Weymann H30/26R bodywork. This was withdrawn from the main M&D fleet in 1959, passing to Fleet Car Sales of Dunchurch, which resold it to Astill & Jordan of Ratby.

## 50 Years Since Weymann Closed - Part 2

*It has been 50 years since the closure of the Weymann bodybuilding company. In the last issue, **Malcolm Wright** offered a brief history and showed the first half of a representative selection of 50 nostalgic photographs showing vehicles bodied by the company. Here are the other 25 pictures.*

**C**harles Terres Weymann started designing and making motor vehicle body parts during the early 1920s, in particular, a fabric-covered car body, soon adapted for passenger vehicles. He formed Weymann Motor Bodies (1925) Ltd, and soon after acquired the Cunard Motor & Carriage Co Ltd and moved into its premises at Putney.

Success was instant, he added a new factory in Indianapolis, building bodies using the Weymann method for American cars. Back in the UK, the Putney site was outgrown and a five acre site was purchased at Addlestone in Surrey, where the company soon began constructing bus bodies. From 1931, double-deckers were added, Charles Weymann resigned and new company was formed, when Weymann Motor Bodies (1925) Ltd joined with Birmingham based Metropolitan-Cammell Carriage Wagon & Finance Co Ltd in 1932, to form a new sales company under the name of Metropolitan-Cammell Weymann Motor Bodies Ltd.



**Above:** FKL 608 was new in 1938, a Bristol K5G with Weymann L24/24R bodywork, which served M&D until 1956. Then it was sold to dealer PVD and on to local firm, Autoyachts, and subsequently to contractor Parham, also of Gillingham, with which it is seen next some mixers, including Dodge 300 Series, 797 UKN.





**Left:** New to M&D in 1939 was FKO 211, a Leyland TD5 with highbridge H24/24R bodywork. Seen outside the local Palace Street works of Rootes, the car manufacturer, it served until 1954, being sold to dealer PVD, then to Taylor of Bicester, being dismantled by 1960.

**Below:** Looking very austere is GKP 10, a 1944 Daimler CW6A with Weymann UH30/26 Utility wartime bodywork. This vehicle was re-bodied, again by Weymann, in 1951 and this original body was broken up at M&D's Luton Depot in June 1951. The re-bodied bus then worked until 1963, being sold to Yorkshire Woollen District Transport of Dewsbury, being re-bodied again by Roe, like the bus seen in picture 2 below.



From then on, MCW as it became known, handled the sales of all the passenger vehicle bodies produced by both companies, from its new sales office in Broadway, Westminster, London. Designs and knowledge were shared, leading to the first metal-framed Weymann bus bodies by 1933.

Weymann built and supplied bus bodywork on many different chassis over the years, to London Transport and many other bus companies, from municipalities to independent fleet operators. Utility bodies were constructed during World War II, followed by some classic designs in the early post-war years, including some RTs for the capital, then versions of MCW designs, like the 'Orion', known as the Weymann 'Aurora'. Maidstone & District was a regular purchaser of Weymann-bodied vehicles, as these pictures show.

No doubt, the costs of production in a factory in the Home Counties contributed to the decision to close the company, with production transferred to the MCCW plant at Elmdon, Birmingham. Weymann bodywork is still, however, held in high regard by many bus enthusiasts.

**1:** It is thought that the small batch, FKO 225-230, 1939 Leyland TD5s, fitted with Weymann 024/24R bodywork, were the last vehicles specifically built to open-top in the UK until recent years. They were stored during the war years and were later popular working out of Sheerness garage. FKO 225 was re-numbered in 1950 as OT1 and served M&D until 1965, passing to dealer TPE of Macclesfield.

**2:** GKP 5 was a 1943 Guy Arab II, originally with Weymann UH30/26R bodywork. It was withdrawn by 1945, passing to Yorkshire Woollen, for which it was re-bodied by Roe, as seen here in 1961 some six years after later. It was finally withdrawn by 1967.

**3:** In 1944, GKP 266 was delivered to M&D, as a Daimler CWA6 with Weymann UH30/26R bodywork. Again, it was re-bodied by Weymann in 1951, with the original bodies being broken up at Luton Depot in March of that year. It then remained in service until 1959, when it was sold through Fleet Car Sales to Premier Travel of Cambridge, in whose livery it is seen here in May 1961.

**Right:** As M&D fleet no DH72, this 1944 Guy Arab II originally had Weymann UH30/24R bodywork fitted. It was re-bodied by Weymann in 1952 and worked in the fleet until 1965. It was sold to TPE and re-sold to Autoyachts and then Parhams both of Lower Gillingham. Alongside stands RKK 995, a 1953 Guy Arab IV with lightweight Weymann 'Orion' H32/26R body. This bus was new to Chatham & District, transferred on closure of that system in 1955 to the main M&D fleet, serving until 1968 and sale to TPE. Notice the difference in the height of the radiators. (M&D and East Kent Bus Club)



**Above left:** HKL 857 was a 1946 Bristol K6A with Weymann H30/26R bodywork, in the M&D fleet until 1959, when it was sold via Fleet Car Sales to Astill & Jordan of Ratby, as seen here in June 1960, where it served for a further five years. **Above right:** HKL 863 was new in the same year as HKL 863, and also originally to H30/26R specification. It was converted to open top in 1957 and re-numbered from DH180 to OT8. It remained in the M&D fleet until 1965, when sold to TPE of Macclesfield. (M&D and East Kent Bus Club)



**Above:** 1950 saw the arrival with M&D of LKT 979, a Bristol K6A with Weymann L27/26R bodywork. It served the company until 1964, when it was sold through TPE to Donald McPherson Paints of Bury. (M&D and East Kent Bus Club)



**Right:** A nice period shot of the lower saloon of a Weymann highbridge 'all-metal' body, fitted to a Leyland chassis with torque converter.

**Below:** An interesting shot showing the 'new' rear-engined Leyland Atlantean of 1959, which was a head-turner in its day 43 DKT was a Leyland PDR1/1 with Weymann L39/34F bodywork, which was exhibited at the Commercial Motor Show in 1958 and built on the second production Atlantean chassis. MCW lettering can clearly be seen on the second window from the drivers cab. This bus worked until 1975 when it was sold to Western National of Plymouth. It was scrapped after 1981.



**Right:** The year 1961 saw the arrival of 345 NKT into the M&D fleet. This was an AEC Reliance with Weymann DP40F single-deck bodywork. It served until 1977, passing to dealer Paul Sykes. Later in life, it received National Bus company livery, with M&D decals on the roof cove panels. (M&D and East Kent Bus Club)



**Left:** 325 NKT was from the next year's batch, to similar original specification to the 1961 vehicles. There had been a fire at the Weymann factory, which completely destroyed its original chassis, so it was delayed from the previous order. It was originally numbered S325 in the M&D fleet, became 3325 and subsequently 8004, when it was converted into OB40F. Then it became 4004 in 1975 before being withdrawn in 1977, with a long and complex disposal history of dealers and loans, include London & Country of Reigate. It was even re-registered as AFE 719A at one time. (M&D and East Kent Bus Club).

**Right:** Another batch of Leyland Atlanteans arrived with M&D in 1963. This one, 597 UKM, was a Leyland PDR1/1 Mk II version with Weymann H44/33F bodywork. It served until 1981. It then passed into preservation, with Edgecombe in Gillingham, was hired to the Kings Ferry in 1982, then with Jarvis, another preservationist in Gillingham before being bought by Smiths of Sittingbourne, then Rimmer of Ramsgate from 1989. It is seen here at the First Transport Rally to be held at Chatham Historic Dockyard in 1985, organised by the writer.





**Above:** Towards the end of Weymann production came this 1965 AEC Reliance 590 with Weymann DP49F bodywork, BKT 807C. It was withdrawn by M&D by 1976 and sold to a dealer, Askin of Barnsley.



**Above:** GUF 393 was a 1945 Guy Arab II fitted with a 5LW engine and Weymann UH30/26R bodywork. It served until 1956 with Southdown, then passed to the Llandudno & Colwyn Bay Electric Railway Co, with which it served as No 12, as seen here in this view prior to final disposal in 1961.



**Above:** JKM 105 was a Weymann H28/26R-bodied AEC Regent III, new to Maidstone & District in 1947. It served in the fleet until 1958, when it was sold to Cotter of Glasgow, where it is seen as fleet no 28, and finally withdrawn from service by 1964.



**Above Left:** EUF 153D Delivered new in 1966 to Southdown Motor Services was this Weymann B45F-bodied Leyland PSU3/1R chassis, although it was converted to B49F in August 1972. This was one of the last Weymann orders to come out of the factory before the January 1966 closure. **Above Right:** 1963 saw the arrival of 612 UKM into the M&D fleet. It was a Leyland PDR1/1 with Weymann H44/33F bodywork. Withdrawn from service in 1979, it was sold to the Bristol Omnibus Co, converted to an open top, to work on the 'Coastrider' service, named 'Moby Dick'. It is seen here in the early 1980s, at the Bristol Festival of Transport Rally on shuttle bus duties. It then passed to Badgerline of Weston-super-Mare and on to several bus dealers before arriving at Ripley at Carlton for dismantling.







**Left:** Swindon Corporation's Fleet No 51 was this 1943 Bus Guy Arab II chassis with Weymann UH30/26R bodywork. The Utility double-decker is still in original condition and is now owned by the Science Museum and stored at Wroughton.

**Below:** Also from the Swindon Corporation fleet is fleet no 112, UMR 112, a Daimler CVG6, with Weymann H36/28R double-deck bodywork, new in April 1960. It is now preserved with The Swindon Vintage Omnibus Society.



**Above:** NLE 580 is preserved with Miller of Twickenham and is an AEC Regal IV with Metro-Cammell B39F bodywork, new in 1953 and returned to its original condition as an RF single-deck bus in London Transport's country fleet.

**Below:** XKT 990 was a 1956 Weymann-bodied B42F single-decker on AEC Reliance 410 chassis. It served M&D until 1970, when it was sold and broken up by Wombwell Diesel Co.





This month, we're looking back to some rallies which we visited during August and the vehicles which caught the eye of our regular correspondents.

# South Cerney

**Mike Forbes** and **Barry Fenn** report from the 2016 Gloucestershire Vintage & Country Extravaganza.

**T**his is the 42nd time this rally has been organised by the Stroud Vintage Transport & Engine Club (SVTEC), on the first weekend of August, at South Cerney Airfield in Cirencester, Gloucestershire, for a few years now. Considered by many to be one of the biggest and best steam, vintage and countryside events in the UK, it attracts thousands of exhibitors and visitors from across the county and raises money for both national and regional charities.

There were many commercial vehicles, old and not so old, plus buses and coaches, all sorts of classic cars, motorcycles, more military vehicles and tractors to be seen, basking in the hot sunshine. Here are some of the interesting vehicles we saw.



**Above and below:** Standing out among the many interesting lorries at South Cerney was this 1961 AEC Mammoth Major Mk 5, YXP 136 – possibly ex-Shellmex & BP – restored as an AEC Works Vehicle, with a beaver-tail body, carrying 1932 AEC Mammoth Major, KJ 5723, ex-Bretts Quarries, Kent, in need of some TLC.



**Above:** Last seen at a previous AEC Rally, in need of restoration after its years on the fairgrounds, Atkinson Mk I eight-wheeler, 837 GYM, is now looking a lot better.



**Above:** Beautifully preserved by Roger Austin and restored in the livery of Swansea showman, Henry Studts, its original operator, DWN 766, is one of the genuine original Scammell Showtracs.



**Above:** This 1948 Albion FT3L platform lorry, FOU 166, has been restored to its original livery, that of brewery, Strong & Co of Romsey, which we covered a few years back in 'Scenes Past'.





- 1: Among the many beautifully-restored lorries was this Leyland Super Comet tipper, RDF 669G, of D J Edwards, of Nibley, near Bristol.
- 2: The Light Industrial Truck Club displayed a large number of these often-overlooked vehicles, including this fascinating example, once the Lister Petter Fire Service factory fire appliance.
- 3: Among an interesting selection of military vehicles was this Diamond T 980 tank transporter tractor, finished in RASC desert sand livery.
- 4: Morris half-ton vans and pick-ups, based on the Cowley car front end are rare enough, but this one with a platform body is probably unique.
- 5: There were several classic motor caravans (please, not 'camper vans') present, including this Ford 400E and Bedford CAL, with variations on the style of elevating roof.
- 6: Seen during a break between giving rides around the airfield is Bristol LDL, VDV 753, now back in the original Western National reversed cream and green livery it wore when converted to open top.
- 7: Dave Rogers has repatriated and preserved Alexander-bodied Leyland Olympian, the last bus built by Leyland, new to Singapore Bus Services in 1994, and 1998 Plaxton-bodied Dennis Dart of New World First Bus of Hong Kong in their original liveries.
- 8: This wonderful miniature Austin K4 lorry has been built around an adapted lawn tractor.



# Drifffield

**Janet Ulliott** visited the Drifffield Steam & Vintage Rally in Yorkshire over the second weekend in August. These are some of the interesting vehicles she photographed there.



**Left:** This AEC Matador, rebuilt as a timber tractor, in the livery of Paul Craven of Malton, registered in 1967 after military service, has benefitted from some restoration work on its cab. **Middle:** A military-pattern 1959 DAF YT-514 4x4 artic unit, now registered OSJ 871 in the livery of Bayliss of Barton on Humber, no doubt originated with the Dutch Army. **Right:** One of many ex-Civil Defence Ford Thames 4D lorries to enter preservation, SXF 220 has been restored with a dropside body in the livery of builder, A Scott of Gateshead.

# Astle Park

**Barry Fenn** went to the Astle Park Traction Engine Rally in South Cheshire, during the weekend, 13-14th August and noted some different commercials.



**Above:** This Bedford TJ with dropside tipper body, XCE 407 (Cambridgeshire, 1960) has been restored in the livery of W Smith & sons, of Lymm, Cheshire.



**Above:** Probably originally an army recovery tractor, this Scammell Crusader, TJA 470R, in the livery of T W Bowler of Stockport, was taking part in a heavy haulage demonstration at Astle Park, with a boiler on two ex-Pickfords bogies.



**Above:** Always popular in preservation is the Austin A60 half-ton pick-up, like this one from the early 1970s.

# Earls Barton

**Barry Fenn** also visited the Earls Barton Steam Rally over the August Bank Holiday weekend.



< Among the usual array of interesting vehicles at the Earls Barton rally, mixing it with the agricultural tractors was this nicely-restored Ford E83W, converted by Pattisson to an off-road pick-up for use in market gardens.



**Above:** A well-preserved Bedford CF2 dropside pick-up, dating from the mid-1980s.



# Lincoln

The 30th Lincolnshire Steam and Vintage Rally was held at the showground just outside Lincoln on the third weekend in August. **Barry Fenn** was there.



Above: This 1929 Manchester tipper, VO 3141, had been brought all the way from St Stephen in Cornwall by its owner, who also rallies two Rowe Hillmaster lorries.



Above: This 1963 Plaxton-bodied Bedford J2, 644 HAA, new to Cooke of Stoughton, Hampshire, was back on the road after many years, when it went to the Lincoln rally.



Above: A fine vehicle to pull your showman's caravan is this ERF C Series-based ballast tractor, XNW 290X.

# Leyland

**Keith Baldwin** went to the 'Great British Lorry Day,' held at the British Commercial Vehicle Museum in Leyland on 21st August. A few of the 'regulars' seemed to be missing, but he saw a couple of lorries he hadn't seen before.



Above: Regularly seen at Leyland are Wall's two Guy Big J4T units, including Gardner 240-powered PKW 914M.



Above: This late model Bedford TK760 with dropside body, B240 CRR, is in the livery of Eddlestone's of Accrington.



Above: Some quite recent vehicles are being seen at rallies these days, like ERF ECX, G13 TRC of T D Catterill.



# Great Dorset Steam Fair

**Allan Bedford** visited this year's event, held a week earlier than usual, 25-29th August, and offers an alternative selection of pictures.



Above: The fairground contained a good selection of ERFs, Fodens, Volvos and a lone Seddon Atkinson. One vehicle I had not seen before was this early ERF 'E' series frame truck, C854 VNR, an obvious target, promoting 'Bedford's Ski Jump'.



Above: Among the usual good Dutch contingent, this magnificent six-wheeled Mack, one of two, was parked next to a stylish bonneted DAF.



Above: This 1927 Stockport-built Crossley - Overland, YT 5350, dates just prior to the introduction of the 'Manchester' brand and is somewhat dwarfed by its neighbour.



Above: The equestrian area is always worth a visit, where this tidy Bedford TL750, C909 END was seen.



Another fantastic 'barn find' was this Morris 'LD'. It's a shame about the corroded ribbing, but it would be nice if this one remained substantially as found. The Canterbury registration dates from 1962/3 and it still carries its Caffyns dealer plate. The laundry originally traded as Maidstone & District Laundry & Co Ltd, and the Corporation's brown buses carried adverts, all rather confusing with all those green and cream buses about! The laundry operated until 1967, on one of the corporations main trolley bus routes where, as the old joke goes, there were 'Loose' trolleybuses passing. A Maidstone Corporation 1947 Sunbeam W with Northern Coachbuilders body, No 71, which carries an advert for the same laundry, is seen at rest at the other end of the route in Barming.





**Above and left:** This Bedford 'S' Type, apparently a 'barn find', was for sale. With its distinctive colour scheme and short wheelbase it reminded me of a real life 'Wells Brimtoy', like the one pictured here. Presumably it carried originally carried a Portsmouth registration.

**Right:** Two Bedford TK-based horse boxes were in attendance. This magnificent 'high end' Oakley took the rosette and carries a 1962 Essex registration, WOO 913.



**Below:** The on-site roving diesel supply was courtesy of a now seldom-seen ERF ES8 six-wheeled tanker Y606 GFM.



## LIFE ON THE ROAD – PART 7

In the 1980s, we saw lots of changes in the transport industry as 'Health and Safety' was now beginning to take precedence over speed and profit. Several hauliers were introducing their own driver training programmes, regardless of how many years driving experience you had. The tachograph ('spy in the cab') was on the horizon, although non-compulsory when first introduced, until we all got to grips with it. And yes, it was the 'Thatcher Years', so I won't rabble on about everything that's been said before, but not all was bad that came out of that era, for example, the assault on crazy unions, hell-bent on ruining the economy and our country was much welcomed by some.

There were times in my ten years at Browns of Beverley – 'Life on the Road – Part 5, issue 202, when I seemed to spend more time in the depot painting trailers and the bosses' house than I did down the road, the problem being 'Browns' had all 40-odd motors locked into the 'Armstrong' contract, manufacturers of shock absorbers and car components, and therefore had no other work to hand out.

Strikes in the car industry were rife. If it wasn't Ford it was BL, then Chrysler, aka Rootes Group, and if it wasn't any of those it was the dockers. As a driver, it was sickening to witness a half-educated, unconcerned shop steward walk up to a fork-lift driver, tap him on the shoulder and say 'pack it in, we're out', often leaving the driver stranded with four pallets, double-stacked at the front of the trailer, 200 miles from home and not knowing when they would return.

One Friday morning I unfortunately found myself in this position at the Leyland truck division in Bathgate, Scotland. I bunged the fork-lift driver a fiver (four pints of beer in 1982). He gladly took the money, before telling me he couldn't lift the last two pallets down but, as he walked away, he looked over his shoulder and said: "The keys are in the forklift, mate." I didn't need telling twice. Ten minutes later, the two pallets were down and I was on my way home. He even signed my delivery notes (Pod) in advance and left them on my truck seat.

Another great feat that came out of that era was the harmonising of all, or most, trucks on British roads as, prior to the Thatcher years, many serious accidents, often fatal, were occurring because of the miss-match of power range versus weight. It didn't take much imagination to predict the outcome of a Scania 110, with 21 tonnes of steel on board, approaching a struggling Atkinson 150 at 60 mph. I witnessed these scenarios all too often and listened to Lady Thatcher's speech on the subject.

Yet another change taking place was the

number of hauliers basing several of their trucks and drivers in a second town or port from their home base. I am not sure how widespread this was, but in Hull we had three 'out of town' hauliers set up camp in one decade alone, and it was feared that they were stealing our work and jobs, as they were ferrying their own drivers in on a Sunday and taking them home again on Friday.

The union, 'TGWU' (Transport and General Workers) was called in and it was quickly discovered that those hauliers already had existing solid contracts with shipping companies, and when those shippers wanted to move a number of sailings into the port of Hull, they simply invited their own transport contractors with them. The situation was resolved over time, by the Union demanding that if anyone wished to base vehicles in the Port of Hull on a permanent basis, they must employ Hull drivers. Job sorted. This is how I became a Russell Davies driver, albeit after having my name on the waiting list for 12 months.

Glynne (Davies) started operations in the port of Felixstowe with a Scania 110 and either a Ford Thames or Bedford, and why I cannot be certain of the actual trucks is that it was nearly 30 years ago that I glanced at the photo of them pinned on the office wall. Russell Davies quickly became recognised as the largest private container haulier in the country, with depots at Southampton, Thamesport (Isle of Grain), Trafford Park, Hull, Tilbury and Ipswich, plus several satellite depots, allowing long haul shipments to operate a night trunk change over.

Many large contracts were secured, including Evergreen, APL, Hapag Lloyd, all shipping container companies, plus Dixons (Curry's Electrical), for which Russell Davies was responsible for the distribution network of all Dixons/Curry's products. But Glynne's 'baby', as he called it, was the Geest contract, with a Dutch shipping company with daily sailings into the port of Ipswich. Not the banana side of Geest, but general imports coming mainly from Holland and Germany.

I cannot recall exactly what year Geest and Russell Davies moved to Hull, as I was busy on the night trunk at 'Browns', but I hazard a guess at around the early to mid-1980s. What I do remember well is receiving a phone call in 1987 from the transport manager at Russell Davies, based on Hull Docks, asking if I could start the following Sunday. Now, when I mention that Russell Davies was the 'crème de la crème' of all hauliers to drive for, you will understand how elated I was to receive that phone call. Russell Davies only ever ran the best motors money could buy; Scania, Volvo,

Iveco and Renault. It was several years later before Mercedes and DAF were added to the fleet, but Scania and Volvo always reigned supreme.

Fred, the Hull transport manager said that I would have to wait a month for my uniform bundle to arrive and, within three weeks, the biggest sack of clothing was stuffed into my motor. This consisted of two pairs of trousers, seven shirts, two pullovers, body-warmer, tie (the compulsory wearing of), padded jacket (in Geest colours), boots and shoes. I was told to take care of them, as they were only replaced every two years. Unbelievable! The most I ever received from any company prior to Russell Davies was a pair of gloves. Needless to say, I wore that uniform with pride.

Glynne Davies himself was a true gentleman; therefore it came as no surprise that he wished to meet every driver at every depot. This he achieved by throwing a Christmas dinner party, including a free bar, at a top hotel in every town in which his drivers were based. This also included wives, partners and girlfriends. Glynne would stay overnight at each hotel and pick up the tab the next morning.

Of course not everyone loved 'Russell Davies'. In fact, some drivers claimed they would never drive for a company that operated a different scale of pay and benefits between drivers. How many of you readers have heard of Generation 1 and Generation 2? Generation 1 had it all. Fantastic sick pay benefits, company pension, food allowance and a fuel bonus, which netted each driver around £400 per year for economy driving, which was paid out at Christmas.

Glynne Davies had a problem though. He wanted to expand big time and needed to employ new recruits at every depot, therefore the way to achieve this was to remove the benefits received by Generation 1, and liaise with the union, to pay new drivers above average earnings. Welcome to Generation 2, of which I was one. I missed out by three months, but never regretted the move, even though we were looked down on by Generation 1 drivers. I could understand their reluctance at having to accept a whole new generation of drivers on a lower level pay scale working alongside themselves. I presumed it made some of them feel uncomfortable, but they need not have worried, as all Generation 1 benefits were secured for life and were carried through the takeovers by 'Securicor Omega' and further by 'DHL'.

Next time: why all new drivers of Generation 2 were requested to start work on a Sunday, and about the night the ferry filled with water in the middle of the Irish Sea, while on the 'Isle of Man' contract.

**B Featherstone, Hull**





## FAIRGROUND LORRIES AT BLACKHEATH

Smashing article by Allan Bedford on funfair vehicles on Blackheath. I thought that you would like to see some of the lorries in question taken by the late Edward James Beazley back in 1977. I wonder if Edward and Allan ever unknowingly crossed paths like ships in the night. Small world and some happy memories.

**Jim King, Billericay**



## THEN AND NOW

I have recently been trawling through hundreds of old photographs taken by the late Edward Beazley, and who would have thought that an image he took in Southampton way back in 1978 would reveal the very same lorry I managed to capture in my home town some 37 years later. It just goes to prove that through the showmans fraternity some of our treasured classics can remain on the roads today.

I have been in touch with Charles Mayne of Mayne Funfairs, regarding his 1977 ERF B Series and he informs me that they collected the lorry in 1989, when it was delivering fuel for Thompsons of Laleham near Staines. It was purchased to carry a waltzer that they had just bought from Billing Aquadrome and used it to carry it back to Farnborough. It was such a good lorry that they have kept it on their fleet to this day.

**Jim King, Billericay**



## PORTLAND STONE AEC

Many thanks for another interesting edition of Vintage Roadscene. On page 72 of issue 204 is a letter from John Dancy regarding the preserved ex-Portland Stone Firms AEC 'Mammoth Major' CLJ 995. I can confirm that this lorry did appear at Battersea Park, London, on 4th May, 1986, on the occasion of the HCVC Brighton Run. I have pleasure in sending an image of the lorry photographed at this location, which I hope will be of interest. It

would be interesting to know if it still exists.

**Dudley Rhodes, via e-mail**

*Thanks for this. Jim Read has confirmed that the picture in issue 203 was taken at the AEC Rally, held at Scammell's Watford factory in 1983 or '84, the picture actually being taken in the station yard, where some of the lorries had to be parked.*

*I'm sure the lorry still exists, although it is not seen so often these days...*



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## Admission:

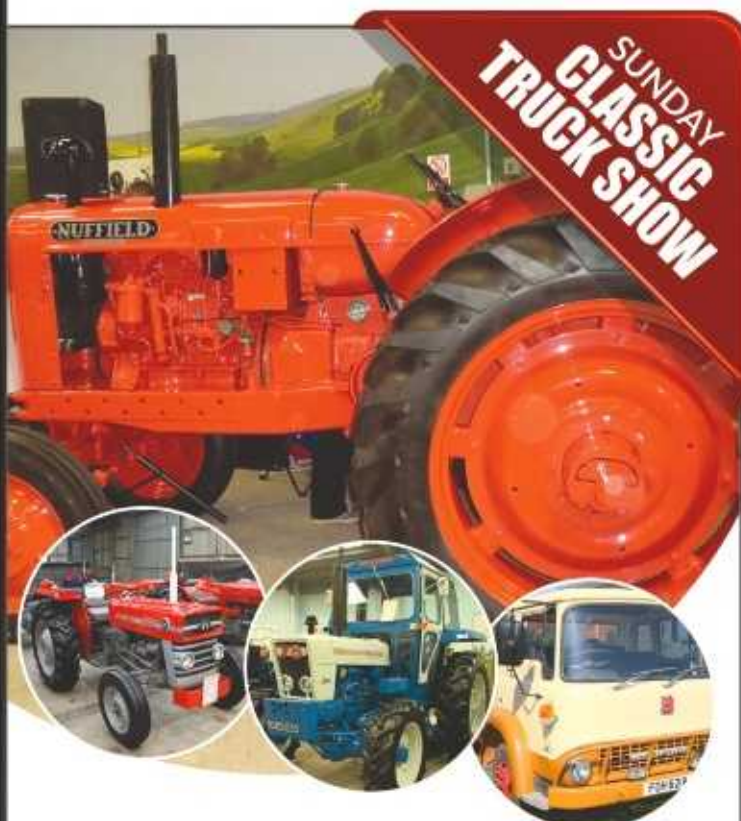
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## POST OFFICE MEMORIES

I just thought I would drop you a line to say how good I have found Red Van Green Van and to congratulate Malcolm on such a good piece of work. Its not often I congratulate Malcolm is it?

As an ex-Royal Mail employee with nearly 27 years service (I started as a Telegram Boy in the late 1970s!), I can remember a large number of the vans shown, and even as late as 1978-'79, we still had two Morris LD vans from 1967 on railway station service and a 1970 EA van on parcel deliveries.

The only two Transits we had at Coventry HPO (my parent office) were two long wheelbase twin-wheel vans, dating from 1973 so fairly modern at the time, and they were allocated as security vans. They were streets ahead of the LD vans in performance and I can remember going in one of the Transits to the local Midland Bank (another name from the past), in Coventry High St to collect £2 million, in cash, for us to send out to our sub post offices for their pension payments etc. We had over 250 sub offices and 11 Crown offices in the CV postcode network at that time, so a lot of cash was needed.

We loaded all the money into big brown Post Office suitcases within the bank ourselves, then two of us 'office wallers' would carry them through the public door out across the pavement and into the back of the van. We knew it was a big cash pick-up, because the main Police Station just down the road sent a PC up to stand guard over us while we loaded the money into the van. I don't think "Elf n Safety" would let you do that today. We then had to sit on the suitcases in the back, as there was no room on the two back seats, because there was so much cash and we couldn't get to the seats.

I visited the PO Archives Reserve Store at Debden in 2013, where some of your photos come from, and was amazed to see a Commer Security Van like the one we had at Coventry HPO. I was even more amazed when I saw the registration and realised that it was the old Coventry van and I had actually worked on it delivering cash and coins to sub offices. I have



attached a photo of the van that I took when I was at the reserve store and I have also attached a photo of the Commer, which replaced the Transits security vans at Coventry, that I took around 1980.

I apologise for the quality of the photo but it is interesting to see the livery in service, compared to how it is now in preservation. As you can see from the 1980 photo, the Commer badging had already disappeared off the front of the van. It was a pig to drive in first gear, as the clutch always juddered and it was like that from the day we got it brand new until we got rid of it. The Post Office would buy all their vans direct from the manufacturers with no warranty and would make any repairs within its workshops, but got the vans at a really cheap price. However, sometimes the quality control left a little to be desired too.

I remember getting a brand new T-registered Marina van with no miles on the clock and taking it out for its first time. It was awful to get into gear and you had to force the gearstick a couple of times before it would slip into gear. I did about 50 miles that day and eventually got back into the office late afternoon. The workshop manager was just crossing the loading bay and I told him how bad the gearchange was. He had a spare ramp, so he said he would have a look.



When we got it onto the ramp, he found that there were only two bolts at the top of the gearbox holding the gearbox bellhousing to the engine block, the rest were missing. The reason why we couldn't change gear easily was because the gearbox was flexing as we drove and the gear would go in when the gearbox and block happened to mate. That was typical of the sort of problems we would get from vehicles although on the whole the new vans tended to be pretty good most of the time as you would expect.

One other story relates to the Commer PB vans with the narrow track on the front axle. Coventry has a number of Edwardian and Victorian streets, with quite a steep camber to the road. There were a few occasions when there was snow on the ground and the postman would drive up in his address to deliver his parcel and park the van at the side of the road on top of the snow. By the time he had gone to his address and then got back to the Commer, the van had slid into the kerbside.

When the postman got back into the van his weight would push the van down onto the top of the kerbstone and ground the front of the Commer. The wheels wouldn't be able to get traction to get out of the road as there wasn't enough weight in the back to provide grip and there was snow between the tyres and the roads, so no grip there either. This resulted in the driver having to try and clear the snow somehow – and they were not equipped with shovels – or get a push off any passers-by who were willing to help. On occasion, the office J4 breakdown van would have to go out and give them a tow to get them out instead.

That's enough reminiscences from me but thank Malcolm for a great memory jerker in my case and some excellent old photos that I have not seen before.

**Tom Caren, British Motor Museum**

*Praise indeed, thanks Tom – and for some interesting stories as well!*

## INTERESTING DETAILS

Issue 203 of Vintage Roadscene is full of interesting items as usual. The Dodge Walk-Thru chassis cab on page 12 came in 30 cwt, 2 ton and 3 ton sizes. The 'phone-booth' type cabs were made by The Willenhall Motor Radiator Co. The 3 ton models had a very reliable Perkins 4-236 diesel engine. The Jensen 6 ton lorry on the same page had a Perkins P6 engine and a Moss gearbox and rear axle. The Perkins-Moss driveline was also fitted to other lorries at that time, such as the Proctor.

The low unladen weight of the Jensen – under 3 tons – allowed the lorry to travel at 30mph, while the heavier Proctor was restricted to 20 mph. The Denniff Leyland Super Comet

concrete mixer on page 32 had a Ford 4D donkey engine. The 4D engines were also used to power air compressors for pneumatic drills. These days, hydraulic pumps fitted to gearboxes have done away with the need for separate engines.

With reference to Issue 204, we've had "50 years without Harrington" and now "50 years since Weymann closed". How time has marched on! It is interesting that, between 1958 and 1965, Weymann built 390 taxi bodies for Beardmore. These had previously been made by Windovers of Hendon, from 1954 to 1956. Wmdovers had also made bodywork for fire engines and coaches, before closing in 1956. Weymann was one of at least nine coachbuilders that made bodywork for the Green Goddess fire engines, all

made to a Home Office design. They included Weymann, Windovers, Whitson, Park Royal, Duple, Harrington and others.

The letter from Bruce MacPhee on page 73 kindly explains why the Austin 5-tonner was known as the K4. The Austin K5 was a forward control gun tractor, similar to a Bedford QL, and the Austin K6 was a normal control six wheeler, not seen very often now.

The pressed steel wheel on the charabanc on page 74 looks like the wheels that were fitted to Thomycroft J-types around 1920.

**H Daulby, Croydon**

*Thanks for more interesting information, as usual.*

## AN AMBULANCE DRIVER REMEMBERS

A recent visit to the doctor led me to 'steal' issue 198 and take it home (since returned!). The reason for my criminal behaviour was that, among the 'Hellos' and 'OKs', I set eyes on a Morris Commercial ambulance of a type I used to drive in the early 1960s. It brought back memories of the days of 'scoop and run' and how ill-equipped and trained we were.

In fact, we were not trained at all, but if we chose to pass a St John or Red Cross first aid course, in our own time, we received an extra 10/- (50 pence) per week to add to our basic £15.00.

One NVS was fitted with a two stretcher arrangement like bunk beds, the top bed raised by hydraulic jacks. I believe this was 'designed' by a local ambulance driver, but was no longer used, as it proved too claustrophobic for the top patient, as he/she was raised towards the dark oak roof – claustrophobic in the extreme!

I must be one of the last drivers with experience of the Morris NVS ambulance, though they were no longer used for emergency work, but confined to special school and hospital out-

patient work. I always thought that they were the last real ambulance chassis produced by Morris and BMC; with a low centre of gravity and balloon tyres they were very stable.

They were followed by the LD and FG, which were little more than "bread vans with stretchers" and when 'powered' by a small (2.2 litre) diesel engine, were an embarrassment that cost lives. Luckily I had a 1965 DS7-engined FG, with a crash gearbox and, in 1966, it gained a two-tone horn. It didn't have power steering or brakes, as we were refused a brake servo on cost grounds, £13.10 I believe and, at almost three tons, brake fade was a constant problem. A narrow rear track made them prone to spinning the inside rear wheel and I had it on two wheels on more than one occasion, usually when a child's life was in danger.

One of the FGs was fitted with rear air suspension, by Dunlop, and a bit of chrome, as an ex-commercial motor show exhibit. The front and rear suspension were totally mismatched and, on the rare occasions I had to drive it on emergency work, I had no confidence to push it to the limit. It probably gave patients a more comfortable ride

on visits to and from hospitals.

I have very mixed memories of those days, when cost ruled everything and marvel that today's crews can even have helicopter back-up. We didn't even have any protective clothing, when infectious meant a patient with TB, though my brilliant mate and I had three typhoid cases from the same house, all died. Afterwards, I thought of the risk we took, having two young daughters, I left the ambulance service with some regret.

Paramedics were certainly the future and I considered the training, but was told the Ambulance Service would pay for my training, but not my wages, for what I believe was a six weeks residential course at that time. We already had to supplement our income by driving on weddings and funerals and delivering trucks around the country, weddings and funerals paid £1 regardless of how many hours they took – cremations were the most popular!

**Peter Eccles, via e-mail**

*Thanks for an interesting story. I hope you're buying Vintage Roadscene now...*

## TAILSCENE LEYLAND

Further to the request to add further information about the BP delivery wagon circa 1920. The suggestion that the vehicle might be a Leyland is correct. It is either a X2 or X3 type, both of which were supplied to the British Army in the early stages of the Great War. It is likely that this vehicle entered military service via the subsidy scheme in 1914. Early Leylands had an ovoid name badge on their radiators, which was superseded by a simple linear badge bearing the name Leyland in capital letters. Tim Gosling in his excellent book, *British Military Trucks of World War One*, Tankograd Publishing, 2014, page 78, informs us that 'the famous Express Carriers company of Carter Patterson:- "replaced the Leyland name badges on the radiator with one that said 'CP&Co." This badge appeared to be smaller than the Leyland badge and circular in shape. The badge on the BP vehicle appears to match Carter Patterson's version. However, as the firm only gave 15 of its Leylands to the Army, it is a bit of a long shot that this vehicle was one of them. Hope this helps.

**Mick Ford, Chelmsford**

*Thanks for the information; I knew somebody could tell us all about the vehicle!*





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## NOT A BADGE-ENGINEERED OCTOPUS

I was greatly disappointed to see that on page 45 of "Red Van ... Green Van" you perpetuated the myth that the Albion Caledonian chassis "became a badge-engineered Leyland Octopus".

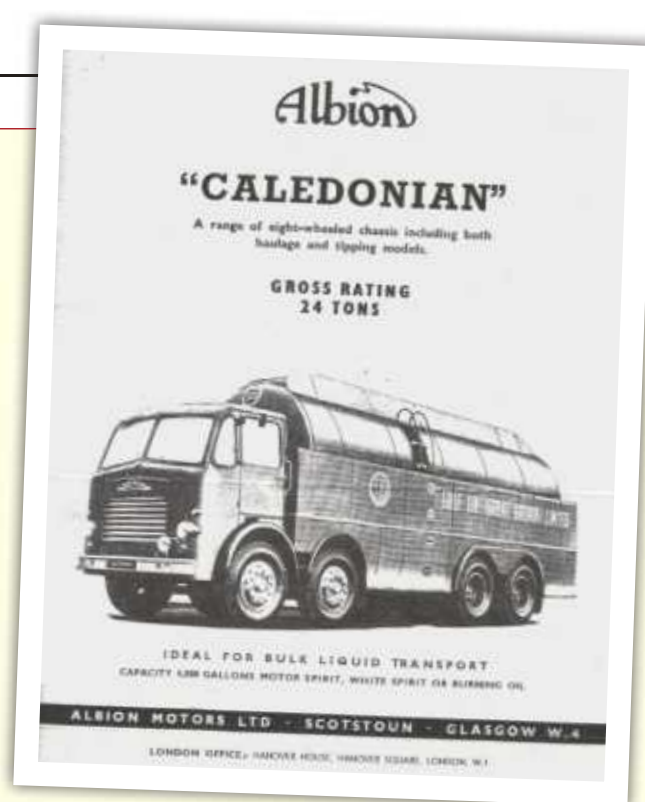
I have noticed this misconception in other publications and among old-vehicle enthusiasts, and I always try to offer the correct facts, although it is usually too late to do any good once the error has been published.

Judging by his piece in the June/July 'Historic Commercial News', John Hanson is also irritated, and sought to state the facts from his own practical experiences, so I am enclosing a copy of his text. Also enclosed is a copy of Albion's Caledonian sales leaflet and, if you study the chassis illustration, you will see that the frame, with its trade-mark tubular cross-members, and the axles were pure Albion HD57; many other features, not least the braking system, were also quite different from the Octopus.

The concept was that of a lightweight eight-wheeler, capable of carrying a legal payload of 16½ tons, something which Leyland could not then do with the Octopus.

**Ian Maclean, Registrar, The Albion Club**

*I am sorry I missed correcting this comment; we have no wish to upset Albion enthusiasts. The leaflet refers to the Caledonian as "a new Albion four-axled goods chassis of extremely low weight" and refers to the various different features. To quote John Hanson, he refers to the 'funny-looking' flat-bottomed diffs and says: "It was a very different animal, made for conflicting jobs, very*



*much lightweight as opposed to the heavy Leyland. Only the engine and gearbox were the same... the cab was devoid of all unnecessary trim. In 1962, Leyland's new Power Plus range with the LAD cab included a lightweight Octopus, so there was no further need for the Caledonian."*

## FAVOURITES

Further to your request for favourites in the recent Vintage Roadscene issues, mine are:-

- 1950s and '60s British lorries
- 1950s and '60s British vans
- All BRS vehicles
- Tankers (1940s- '60s British) and
- Eight-wheeled lorries (1940s- '60s British) and...
- Apple-flavoured individual fruit pies...

I enjoy the magazine and the Road Haulage Archive is excellent, too!

**Peter Gomm, Saffron Walden**

*Thanks for your kind comments. We aim to please – we're not always successful, but we do our best. Those individual fruit pies; we look back with fondness, but they were really only a bit more tasty than the cardboard boxes they came in, weren't they. I remember a party of us had one dodgy batch, all green on the outside – but one daft b... still ate his!*

## LIVERIES

Regarding the discussion of liveries on page 31 of issue 203, hopefully I can throw some light on the subject.

I was employed by Templemans Haulage in the late 1960s. This was quite a large fleet, based in the centre of the village of Carlbly, Lincolnshire (imagine that today...). The livery was dark and light blue, signwriting was in Gold Leaf. Mainly agricultural haulage, their biggest customer was Wherry & Sons of Bourne, Lincs. In later years, Wherry's lorries were painted in Light Blue with some panels picked out in Darker Blue. I do remember an older Foden S18 eight-wheeler they had was all Light Blue. One thing that stands out in my memory was the telephone number Bourne10.

My next job was driving for J & E Kenny of Oxney Road, Peterborough, mainly brick haulage. I would be very grateful if anyone has any information or pictures of this fleet; the livery was light and dark green. They haven't been featured in any classic truck magazine that I am aware of.

**Michael Sharpley, Lincs Haulage, Welbourn**

## JENSENS AND MORE

While I'm enjoying your 'Rare Ones' publication, I am surprised at the inclusion of high-volume firms; I'd have preferred more detailed information and photos on really small manufacturers. But I was immensely pleased by the photo of the Dakins Removals Seddon Mk 15 pantechnicon and can tell you why it didn't have a drop-well. As we did more and more haulage work, we required high-floor vehicles giving level access to loading docks – as simple as that. By the time that 835 BAU came along, only the Dennis Pax,

Seddon Mk 6 and Jensen E) 9220 had walk-in tailboards and drop-wells.

Talking of Jensens, while picking up spare parts for EO 9220 at West Bromwich, I saw a prototype flatbed in the yard that never went into production. It had the deep-valanced bodysides, but sported a GRP cab, with curved windscreens and the usual JNSN grille, plus a short gearstick, protruding from the box-like engine cover. It was on tradeplates, so must have been out on the road at some time. So what was it? A last-ditch attempt to stay in the commercial vehicle market that didn't come

off? Perhaps Roadscene readers can come up with an answer to this mystery.

I'd guess that the Sentinel steamer in that 1948 photo belonged to a large government order for steam lorries in 1948 for one of our African colonies, placed in conjunction with the ill-fated groundnut scheme. Sentinel's downfall was partly caused by problems with their indirect-injection engines, which had to be converted to direct-injection under warranty, which nearly bankrupted them and the adverse publicity harmed their customer base enormously.

**David Watts, Nottingham**





## IRISH INTERLUDE

Congratulations on the wonderful eight-page (and cover) feature on 'Buses in Dublin in 1951'. It is a marvellous selection of photographs, which captures the scene at the time. I have to mention that I was not quite four years old then, but many of the buses featured lasted well into a time during which I can remember them well. The captions on the photos are very informative and due credit to you for that. I was especially interested in the GNR buses, as my late father worked on them. I have attached a photo of two ex-GNR buses preserved by the National Transport Museum and on display in Howth, North Dublin. They are AEC Regent III, no 438,

ZH 3937, a Park Royal-bodied bus from 1948 and GNR Gardner no 390, IY 7384, built in the bus body shop of the GNR Railway Works in Dundalk, on Park Royal frames, entering service in 1951.

The only small item to mention is that the 30 'River' class coaches were in the reversed CIÉ livery when built, Eau-De-Nil (light green) with olive green flashes, as the yellow and grey livery did not appear until the U class Royal Tiger coaches arrived in 1954 and was subsequently applied to those 'River' class coaches which were retained on coach duties. The others were converted to buses and fitted with rear doors, a fate which befell the entire 'River' class fleet eventually.

It should be mentioned that ten P Class buses were fitted with coach seats and some were painted in the reversed livery mentioned above, to fulfil an urgent need for touring purposes, prior to the arrival of the first 'River' class coaches in 1950.

Again, well done on an excellent feature.

**John Curran, Dublin**

*Sorry about the colours of the 'River' class. I am very grateful for having found much of the information quoted in the captions on the internet, but I was misled on the colours. Perhaps local knowledge is everything. Thanks for your correction.*

## HEAVY HAULAGE

Having just read the excellent Heavy Haulage Archive, I think a Volume 2 on this subject would be most welcome.

It would be good if you could included some of Amey's Group, V Brookbank, E Hull of Bedford and Elliott of York in the next instalment. One thing, all the Fodens on page 29 are S20s not S21s, Here's to the next archive, which I saw in the shops.

Perhaps you could consider export vehicles for a archive. British manufactures exported all over the world for many years, so perhaps this is an idea for you to follow up for another archive. Anyway keep up the good work, and I like the magazine just as it is.

**Mike Court, via e-mail**

*Sorry, I'm always getting S20 and S21 mixed up, in spite of knowing which is which – number blindness? We included some pictures of export vehicles which would not fit in the Road Haulage Archive issue in this magazine a few months ago. We'll publish Volume 2 when we have amassed enough suitable pictures...*

## ARMY DRIVING TESTS

Regarding the section in the October issue of Vintage Roadscene, on the army driving tests, these were very likely after 1948. In one of the pictures, there is an officer, with a royal Electrical, Mechanical Engineers badge on his cap. This badge was issued when the REME was re-badged in 1948. The officer is marked on the picture.

**Hugh Doohan, Dunfermline (ex-REME)**



## THE HARD SELL AND LIFE ON THE ROAD

I found Malcolm Bates selection of advertisements from magazines from the early 1930s very interesting, particularly those showing defunct manufacturers and the steam lorry, which must have had pneumatic tyres to travel at 30 mph. This was before speed limits came in for commercial vehicles; I remember steam lorries around Liverpool in the 1950s proceeding silently with full loads at over 30 mph.

However, I don't think he understands the thinking behind the references in many of the adverts to their products being British and he questions the American-owned Ford Motor Company's right to make this claim. In the late 1920s, Ford spent a considerable amount of money in reclaiming land in the Dagenham Marshes on the Thames Estuary and building a large new factory there, to produce cars, vans, light commercial vehicles and tractors. When it opened in 1931, it replaced the factory in Trafford Park, Manchester.

In addition to employing several thousand people, it used local services and bought in specialist British components, such as electrical items, exhausts, wheels and tyres that it did not make itself. Raw materials were also needed for the foundry and machine shops. Throughout the UK, several thousand people were employed by dealers selling the vehicles. I think that Ford could safely claim to contribute to the British economy; it was only some of the profits that went to America.

Concerning his comments on the Dagenite advert, London Transport had been founded in the mid-1800s with French capital; this was replaced by British capital long before the end of that century, so London Transport was truly British. The reason for stressing they were British was that they were employing British workpeople and materials as Britain was suffering from the effects of a Worldwide Depression following the Wall Street Crash in October 1929. They were appealing to prospective customers to take this fact into consideration when making purchases. Unfortunately, the majority of UK citizens whilst professing to be patriotic, unlike those of France and Germany, tend, mistakenly, to think that foreign products are better.

Another interesting fact concerned the Willys 30 cwt lorry. These were assembled in Manchester by Crossley

Motors. To improve their 'British' image, a new radiator was fitted with the name Manchester cast in the tank. I remember seeing a 1931 example, RC 243, in pristine condition in regular use by a building firm in Derby in 1950.

I was, naturally, particularly interested in the two Guy adverts. They both were for models with similar payloads. The first for the 30 cwt model appeared in 1930 and the second for the Wolf 2-tonner around 1934. At first glance, for readers who appreciated that period, the price had been reduced to secure business because of the Depression. The real reason was the Road Traffic Act 1930, which introduced Construction and Use Regulations. Amongst other stipulations, it limited gross vehicle weights and dimensions for goods and passenger carrying vehicles according to the number of axles.

A new system of vehicle taxation was introduced for goods vehicles, which was based on the lorry's unladen weight, excluding oil, water and spare wheel. A speed limit of 20 mph applied to lorries unless their unladen weight was less than 2 tons 10 cwt, which allowed them to travel at 30 mph. This prompted all manufacturers to re-design their models to minimise the weight, which also reduced costs, so Guy was able to offer a new chassis with a nominal payload of 2 tons (and capable of another ton) for £239 – £59 cheaper than a 30 cwt model offered four years previously. Guy chassis were individually built to customers requirements and were dearer than the mass-produced Bedford, Ford and Morris Commercial products, but discerning operators were prepared to pay a premium for lower running costs and greater durability.

I am enjoying Brian Featherstone's articles on 'Life on the Road'. The one in the October issue of VRS on moving caravans was of particular interest. When I worked for AEC at its West Bromwich Depot in 1964, I had a customer – Fordhouses Service Station from Wolverhampton – to whom I had sold four AEC Mercury Mk 2 lorries. The owner asked me to call, as he had a need for an artic. When I arrived, he explained that he had a contract to move static vans and needed an articulated outfit. We looked at the requirements. The vans weighed about 3 tons, were about 9 ft high and a similar width. The semi-trailer would weigh about 2½ tons, with a total weight with a winch, ramps, chains, etc of 3 tons. This gave a loaded trailer weight of 6 tons.

I could only offer him the Mercury Mk.1 tractor unit, designed for 19 tons gross with an automatic coupling or 24 tons gross with a fifth wheel. He did not favour the automatic coupling. After lengthy discussion, in which the wind resistance was taken into account, we could not justify the extra cost of a Mercury, so a new Bedford TK was bought with a Bedford 330 oil engine. Seven months later, I had a phone call asking me to call on the following day and bring a quotation for a Mercury tractor unit with a fifth wheel coupling. When I arrived, he read the quotation and gave me an order. He explained the TK had broken down the previous day and needed a new engine. The work had proved too much for it. I said that while the quotation was being typed, I had found a suitable tractor unit with low ratio differential, which would be ideal, as there were no hills that the AV470 engine could not cope with, even with a strong headwind and I could have it ready for the road in three weeks.

I recall one other incident involving Fordhouses Service Station. I was in the depot at West Bromwich, when a call came from Leyland Corporation Headquarters in Berkley Square, London, asking if I could find a haulier who could take a Triumph car down to their premises from Coventry the next day in the late afternoon using a Leyland lorry. I tried two hauliers with Super Comets but they were unable to help. Knowing of Donald Stokes long-standing dislike of AEC, I rang Fordhouses Service Station to see if they could help. They told me they could get one of the Mercury drivers to start a little earlier in the morning, so that when he had delivered some chassis frames from John Thompsons to Leyland, he could get back in time to clean the lorry and hand over to another driver to do the job. I gave them details and thanked them for their help.

I rang Berkley Square and told them Fordhouses Service Station would do the job, but neglected to tell them it would be an AEC. I also told my boss, in case there was a complaint and he was delighted. I don't know if Donald Stokes saw the car arrive (I hope he did) but a photograph was taken and appears in Graham Edge's book on 'The AEC Mercury'.

I hope this information may be of some interest to readers.

**Robin Hannay,  
Stratford upon Avon.**



## COLIN 'BASHER' BIGGS

I am writing with the very sad news that my dear brother and best mate, Colin 'Basher' Biggs passed away peacefully on 16th August, after a short illness (1946-2016). He was in the Royal Free Hospital, London and is sadly missed by his family and friends. He is survived by brother Dave, sister Mary, myself and all our families. Basher was his nickname at school and known affectionately by us.

He used to go out with our late Dad, all through the 1950s, with Dave, in Ham river Grit tippers, AEC Monarch, Foden FG and his beloved Bedford 'S'. Dad had three of these.

Colin left school and had various jobs; apprentice at Lotus Cars, driver's mate on a Thames Trader, delivering animal feed, labouring for three or four building firms then, in 1965, he landed a job in Hall & Co's workshops, at Fishers Green Pit, Waltham Abbey, Essex.

He loved the job, working on a large mixed fleet, with the mainstay being Bedford and Guy. He was there for two years. In 1967, at 21, he took the firm's driving test, passed and went on the road. He got Dad's old Guy Warrior, 978 BOY, fleet no 3735.

Colin stayed at Fishers Green until 1972 and the St Albans Sand & Gravel take-over. He drove all makes of lorry on various jobs, AEC, Albion, Bedford, Commer, Dodge, Foden, Ford, Guy, Leyland, Scammell Seddon Atkinson and later

DAF, Hino, MAN and Renault.

I used to go out with my dad and Colin and went in all their lorries and have a lot of happy memories. I have enclosed three photos:- Colin with the St Albans Foden S36, VUV 105G, Gardner 6LX 150, 12-speed. I took this shot at Harlow, Essex, in 1970.

The Foden BRR 470C, an S21, ex-Hoveringham, with Foden two-stroke FD6, 175 bhp, 12-speed, was again at Harlow, in 1973, on the construction of the M11.

Lastly, even though retired, back in the driving seat of our great mate, Mick Abbott's Foden S39.

**Alan Biggs, Enfield**



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# Water, water everywhere ...



Ray Newcomb sent us this picture, which appeared in the Grimsby Telegraph 'Bygones' column. His suggested caption is: "Row faster, Harry, I got my call-up papers last week..." However, the situation wasn't really a joking matter, as the picture shows two modes of rescue at Mablethorpe on the Lincolnshire coast, after the terrible East Coast floods of 1953. The number on the rowing boat suggests it might have been borrowed from the local boating lake. The wartime Bedford 'QL' was obviously doing sterling service, helping evacuate stranded residents from their flooded homes. With its four wheel drive and lots of ground clearance, it would have been the ideal tool for the job, which the army had been given, as always, undertaking its usual peacetime role of helping out whenever disaster strikes.



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